

CHRIST'S DEITY



God's Ultimate
Self-Revelation

George R. Jaffray, Jr

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By

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to the wonderful Yahweh Jesus, Adonai and Christ.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I acknowledge the tremendous contribution of Thomas G. Thompson, who continually pushed me to continue in writing. It is one thing to be moved to study but another thing to write it out and get it into shape as an actual book. Thank you Thomas.

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The fact that from the gospel Christians know that only God can save them and the fact that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world to die for their sins in order to save them means that Jesus Christ has to be God in the flesh. But apart from a consistent logical explanation that is a complete mystery.

Scripture however teaches that Christians are to be able to give an account for the hope that is in them. This is a mandate to construct logically consistent doctrines which articulate with each other in a system of doctrine starting with the truths that all Christians have and are expressed in Scripture. The construction with regard to Christ's deity consists of integrating components that are logically necessary to explain the biblical facts coherently.

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distinct from each other. In addition the Holy Spirit is distinct from the Father and his Son, Jesus. But all three Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have the attributes of deity, yet all three are distinct selves. At the same time Jesus is truly human, born of the Virgin Mary, t but called the Son of God, unique in relation to God the Father. These are biblical facts but apart from a rational explanation are a mystery. Heresies deny the biblical facts concerning God particularly that Christ Jesus is Yahweh (LORD, Jehovah) and so deny the deity of Christ.

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In conclusion, by following out ontology by deduction from

biblical data taken as revealed facts concerning Christ and the one true God, one is led to the doctrine of Christ's deity in complete logical harmony with his humanity and in complete logical harmony with the doctrine of one true God Yahweh as the ontological Trinity. It is not a rationalistic construction based on human supposition but doctrine wholly derived from Scripture. We can give a completely rational account for the hope that is in us.

****PREFACE****

***1* Christ's Deity - God's Ultimate Self-revelation**

Systematic theologies have generally presented difficient views of God and Christ while at the same time upholding basic fundamental truths. The root cause is a treatment that fails to incorporate what may be known concerning God Himself from his ultimate self-revelation in the incarnate God, the God-man Christ Jesus. The concern of this book is to elucidate the ontology of Christ and God. We make no apology for emphasizing and using the term ontology because we are not endeavoring to give a complete theology but rather a rational account for the hope that we have relating to the being of Christ and the Trinity so there are no seeming contradictions leaving unexplained mysteries.

***2* Thesis of the Book**

A thesis of this book is that God reveals Himself and uses his divine attributes, such as omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience, as instruments used by divine choice. This is completely consistent with Jesus being 100% God and 100% man, yet living his life in a of state of humiliation in which He never used any of his divine abilities. There is no mystery that needs to be called on. Thus, a purpose of the book is to show that the view that in Christ's state of humiliation Jesus never used any of his divine abilities is entirely consistent with the view of God

given to us in Scripture. Alternative views lead to impossible contradictions which have to be justified as "divine mysteries," or compounded with speculative explanations, which are in fact just excuses for bad theology. The book defends the Chalcedonian Christology of the full deity of Christ Jesus, one of the three in the Trinity who in the flesh has both the one full divine nature of the Trinity and a full human nature as a man. So defending this position as completely biblical is an additional thesis of this book.

In the process of demonstrating this it is necessary to state explicitly and accurately the meaning of the terms used in declarations of church councils in giving a true interpretation of Scripture and provide the justification for the specific meanings used historically by showing that the meanings of the terms used in the councils are completely consistent with valid conclusions even though usage among various writers varied and some minor but official statements were incorrect. The exact meaning of the terms is shown by the impossibility of the alternative meanings because the alternatives cause the statements to contradict fundamental truths concerning the Trinity and Christology. But we believe that what is presented here comes by consistent rational deduction from Scripture, and that a completely consistent rational doctrinal account is given of Christology and the Trinity.

***3* Anticipated Conclusion**

The final statement to be anticipated is that Christ must be seen as fully God without compromising his humanity in both his state of humiliation and his state of exaltation. In his very Person He is the ultimate revelation of God. Not only does Scripture teach this directly as something to be taken on faith as a mystery, but it is something that leads to an actual understanding that can be stated explicitly and with logical clarity. Because in his very Person He is the

ultimate revelation of God, it follows that God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit work through the divine capabilities of the one God as their instruments individually. Consequently as incarnate deity Jesus' actions may be understood in a rationally consistent manner either as acts through the divine nature or else acts through the human nature. The succeeding chapters lead to this conclusion as stated here in summary.

There are many other books that treat the entire life of Jesus and treat doctrine as it has been articulated traditionally and down through history. This is not intended to be a book documenting all that has been said on Christology and the Trinity and so there is no mass of footnotes. Where a quotation is given no source is documented but enough is given for the reader to find *it* through a simple internet search. The translated biblical text that is provided is that of the KJV unless otherwise noted. This is for convenience, not for authority, which is the text of the original languages. The book is a position statement, concerned with the complete logical consistency of the ontology of Christ and of the Trinity.

****CHAPTER 1** INTRODUCTION**

In this introduction we give a reason for the book and explain how we proceed. What all Christians know about the deity of Christ comes from God's revelation as a mystery. But Christians are to be able to give a rational account for the mystery. The right way for Christians to proceed is to start with the gospel and go to Scripture to build a foundation of fundamentals of the Christian faith and then use reason applying them to uncover the facts concerning the deity of Christ. Then one should proceed using deduction from the facts of Scripture to reason what is logically necessary to explain the facts.

***1* The Necessity of Theology concerning God and Christ**

Scripture teaches that Christians are to be able to give an account for the hope that is in them:

1Pet. 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

The word reason is the Greek term *logos*: a word, a spoken discourse, a rational account, and also used referring to God. It has a wide variety of usages, but here has the meaning of giving a rational account.

This is a biblical mandate to give a rational account for the Christian's hope, a mandate to construct logically consistent

doctrines which articulate with each other in a system of doctrine. In particular it is a task to logically account for the Godhood of Father, Son and Holy Spirit as one true God, and it is a task to logically account for both the deity and the humanity in Christ Jesus

***2* Knowing the Truth**

Scripture declares that Christians know the truth. The starting point from which Christians are to build is the truth that they already know. Scripture states that they have this:

1 John 2:20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

21 I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

The apostle John states that all who are true Christians know the truth because they have an unction from the Holy One, the Holy Spirit. This is none other than knowing the truth of the gospel by which they all have been saved. It is from this knowing of the gospel truth that Christians can discern the fundamental truths that are foundational to theology.

***3* Truths of the Gospel**

Inherent in the gospel is the truth that the gospel stems from the truth of God expressed in Scripture. Thus, the statements of Scripture give truths concerning God and Christ. These truths cannot in themselves in isolation be understood in a logically consistent way but are accepted as a mystery taken on faith.

It is the task of Christians to use the processes of deductive logic to integrate the truths and to analyze the entire body of facts and truths and then synthesize them into a coherent and consistent system of truth. This task is not something optional for Christians but mandated by the injunction of

Scripture to prepare in such a way as to be ready to give a rational account of their faith, the hope that is in them.

****God's Plan of Salvation****

We can give a statement of the truths of the gospel that all who are truly Christian should be able to acknowledge:

God rejects people because of their sin. People either try to put that out of their thoughts or ridicule it. So what does a person have to do for God to accept him? According to the Bible it is to repent and trust Jesus. Basically the good news is that God accepts people who come to Him in Christ, without considering anything that they have done or failed to do. What people need to know are the truths that God is the eternal, holy Creator and Ruler; that man is rebellious and depraved, though in the image of God; that Christ as God's Son is the Redeemer of those who become truly converted, are born of God and who turn in repentance and faith to Christ.

(1) The eternal, sovereign Creator and Ruler.

The Bible teaches that God is love, but it also teaches that the wrath of God now abides on those who do not believe in Christ (John 3:36). Scripture nowhere says that God loves the sinner but hates his sin. It does say that God is angry with the sinner continually. People raise such questions as, "How can there be a good God that allows physical evil?" That shows a basic misunderstanding of the nature of God. Sin does exist and suffering does also. Therefore, if there is a God, He is not the "good god" that men think. God does allow suffering. The question is how God, who is eternal, holy, and good, could allow suffering to exist in the world. Of course, suffering is not always evil. For example, pain is necessary for a person to avoid harm, like a child who gets burned slightly. He learns to avoid touching a hot stove and getting burned seriously.

The Bible teaches that after man first sinned, God cursed the earth for man's sake (Genesis 3:17-19). But in addition, hardship and natural disasters are a warning that God is not what people often picture Him to be, a god who will not let men suffer, such as suffering eternally for their sins. We have to lay to rest the idea that God can be anything else than what He reveals Himself to be.

He reveals in the Bible that He is sovereign: He has the right to create, to rule, and to set standards according to his own will. If there is a God He is sovereign, or He wouldn't really be God. According to the Bible, God says, "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from the ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. 46:9-10). He created the world, and He has power over his own creation. God is a God who can do as He pleases. That is why He also says, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things" (Isa. 45:7), and "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker!" (Isa. 45:9).

People don't like this picture of God. They want to be free to do what they think is right, and they don't want anyone telling them what they can or can't do, even the God who made them.

(2) God's Holiness and Man's Sin and Depravity.

The Bible also teaches that God created man in his own image (Genesis 1:27), with true knowledge (Col. 3:10) and righteousness (Eph. 4:24). Because he was created in God's image, man is capable of receiving revelation from Him, and this is shown in the book of Romans: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them" (Rom. 1:19). In other words, built into themselves is something that shows men what God is like. And it says, "For the invisible things from the

creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. 1:20). So even the creation shows that God is sovereign. But men have sinned, and so it is written, "When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Rom. 1:21). They "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator" (Rom. 1:25). People must worship something, and if they don't worship God, they will worship idols, nature, religion, wealth, or they will worship the product of their own minds, or even other men. They have insulted and rejected the infinite and holy God. How does God respond to that? What God actually did was to give people up to their own corrupt natures. Look at the description here in Romans chapter 1 (Rom. 1:28-32). Deep within them men know that they have sinned against God and that what they do is against his just standard, his law. That is what sin is - lawlessness (I John 3:4), and Jesus summarized God's law this way, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." And, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:37, 39). In other words, sin consists of what we think and feel, as well as what we do; it consists of what we have neglected, as well as what we have done wrong. And God holds every bit of this against us. That is especially true for those who put the thought of God entirely out of their minds and pretend He does not even exist.

Not only is it true that sins are against a God who is infinite. Sin requires an infinite punishment! This is why finite people can never make up for their sins. And no one can make up for it with good deeds, because the Bible also says "But we are as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses – our good deeds - are as filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6). But then, too, our finite good deeds could never make up for the infinite wrong against the infinite God.

And God is holy. There is no way out for Himself. God by his very nature has no choice but must punish sin. "But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness" (Isa. 5:16). God is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and can'st not look on iniquity (Hab. 1:13).

If all this is so, how in the world is it possible for God to ever accept anyone who has sinned? In the first place, God is merciful in postponing his judgment on us. He is good to both just and unjust people, letting them both enjoy sun, rain, and food, and good things (Matt. 5:45; Acts 14:17) while they last. And if one person harms another, the one who is harmed does not suffer more than he deserves in God's sight. And a holy and just God will not let them go free. But there is another reason why God postpones his judgment. God is merciful, so that some will have the opportunity to be saved from judgment by Christ and what He has done.

(3) God's Provision of Redemption in Christ.

Jesus Himself said, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father – God - but by me" (John 14:6). It seems completely unreasonable for anyone to say that he is the one way men can come to God, doesn't it? So how could Jesus have the right to say that? First, he would have to have kept God's law perfectly and be sinless. And the Scripture says that he "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). Christ was predicted long before to be the sinless, human substitute to pay the penalty for sin. In that way he could be the one way men can come to God. God's Word says that God "shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by knowledge of him shall his righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities" (Isa. 53:11). That's what Christ's death on the Cross means. Christ suffered for their sins, in the place of sinful men. As sinful man could not pay the

penalty for another's sin; he must pay for his own sin. Jesus could only pay the penalty for another's sin, by being sinless.

But the suffering and death of one finite man could never pay the penalty for the sins of many people against an infinite God. Even a sinless, perfect man, because he is finite, could only pay the penalty for one other person. To satisfy God's justice, the payment for many people could only be sufficient if Jesus Christ Himself were more than finite - if He were Himself God. And that is what Scripture says: "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). That is the meaning of Jesus' birth. What happened is called the incarnation. Jesus was a perfect, sinless human, but also infinite God; and because God has power over his creation, He could send his eternal Son into the world in this way: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, his eternal Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:16-17). "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law (Gal. 4:4).

(4) God's requirements.

But unless the Spirit of God has been working in a person's heart and he is born again and have a spiritual birth —he cannot enter into God's kingdom or be accepted by God. It says, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5), and "But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become the children of God - accepted by God - even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13). So there must be a change in one's heart, so that he becomes a new creation in Christ:

new motives, new desires, and new ways of thinking. And that is not the kind of change a person by himself can make within himself. But there is something that God commands a person to do: repent and trust Christ (Acts 20:21). But repentance is not just being sorry for one's sins: "Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor. 7:10). It is turning away from one's sin's and the flesh, and turning away from the world and all that it stands for (John 17:16; 15:19). It means giving up the past life that we have been living. And that is why God has to do the work within, because only He can change our hearts to make us willing to do that much, and only He can give the power to carry it out. If real repentance is to take place, the person who repents must depend entirely on God. The other thing that goes along with that is faith. God says that men are to trust, believe in, or have faith in Christ. Jesus said, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John 6:47). To believe on Him means to believe in Him as He really is. He is God's Son, and that means that He has the right to rule over us and direct our lives. We must commit ourselves to Him and receive Him as Lord and Savior. Then He promises that God will accept us and make us his children. That means we must put our eternal destiny in the hands of Jesus Christ and follow Him. And it is not just that God gives people an opportunity; He commands people to be saved from their sin and the judgment due to them for it. He accepts every one who repents —and turns from his own way and his sin to trust Christ.

(5) The Consummation and Judgment.

The Bible says that Christ not only died on the Cross for sin, but he arose from the dead and appeared to the early disciples (1 Cor. 15). "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory

of God the Father" (Phil. 2:8-11). This is why Jesus could say that those who condemned Him to death would see Him again "sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mark 14:62). When He comes again He will rule on the earth and make everything right. God says, "Yea, all kings shall fall before him; all nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the needy . . . " (Psa. 72:11-12), and, "In his day shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust" (Psa. 72:7-9). "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (1 Cor. 15:25), and ". . . he shall rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 19:15). And not only that, all those who are in Christ will be caught up to be with Christ when He comes: the dead in Christ shall be raised first and then the others in Christ (1 Thess. 4:16-17). And God has promised that they shall reign with Christ on the earth (Rev. 5:10) and judge the world with him (1 Cor. 6:2). But for those who are not Christ's we read: *that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thes 1:7-8). And Jesus said, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son "; "marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation " (John 5:22, 28-29). Some will go away into everlasting punishment (Matt. 24:46). But the everlasting fire that Jesus spoke of was not created for men; it was prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 24:41).

(6) The Gospel Call

In view of the impossibility to do anything but accept God's

way to be saved it is clear that one cannot be saved of works, but only by God's grace. (Eph. 2:8-9) "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:5). Scripture says it is necessary to call upon the Lord and confess with the mouth to God to be saved (Rom. 10:8-13).

***4* Starting with the Fundamentals**

Theology is grounded in Scripture and to be deduced from Scripture alone and because it must be consistent with the truths of the gospel it must be presupposed that those who engage in it are Christians. Christians are to construct their theology by deduction from Scripture interpreted with historical and grammatical principles and consistent with the truth that they have in the gospel applied to the entire body of Scripture, and not just historical and grammatical interpretation alone. Why Scripture alone? Why historical and grammatical interpretation? Why by deduction?

They are to come from Scripture alone because Christians are to get true understanding from God alone, not intermixed with corruptions that come inevitably from sinful men. Scripture is the written Word of God transmitted through his proven prophets and apostles. And all of Scripture is "God-breathed," precepts, teaching, history, etc. So everything is to be tested by Scripture.

But it is not enough to simply take words from Scripture to construct doctrine. The words have a single meaning because they come from one source. The meaning is not just what impresses an individual but something that is to be held by all Christians together as a single body of believers who look to the foundation of apostles and prophets as they wrote under the inspiration of God. And since the meaning is something that was to be understood by believers throughout history, the meaning must be

understood according to the meanings of the original writings in their historical context. And specific meanings or the words are to be understood in relation to the actual flow of thought in the passage where they are given as they could be understood by the original recipients.

In addition theology is to be constructed by deduction and not by an inductive process. Induction inherently cannot lead to anything but conclusions that are only probable to a lesser or greater extent. This is inconsistent with the declaration of Scripture concerning its truths.

So the first task of theology is to state clearly the biblical facts related to doctrine and to deduce what the fundamental doctrines of Scripture are definitely implied by those facts. Those who don't hold to the fundamental doctrines of Scripture cannot construct sound theology or in general interpret Scripture correctly. We see this all the time in the pseudo-Christian sects and in untaught Christians who are encouraged to simply follow the Bible without the proper theological foundation. Moreover we see it here and there among theologians who are inconsistent with their own principles.

Among those who are not false Christians, however, we often find serious errors in theological method. First people engage in proof-texting, taking Scripture passages out of context and using them as proofs for points of doctrine. Second people often treat Scripture like natural science, as a source of facts from which to induce doctrine by a procedure of hypothesing and testing. This is the more common error. Why is this seriously wrong?

What happens in this inductive approach is that inevitably Scripture passages are interpreted in accordance with the hypothetical thesis. But then it is falsely supposed that if there is no biblical passage that is contrary to the thesis, handled this way, the thesis is valid truth. But that amounts

to finding a set of so-called possible interpretations of all relevant passages that are consistent with the thesis. Usually the thesis is a guess suggested by something that the person thinks he sees in Scripture. Yes, and it is so attractive to the person that he attributes his guess to the Holy Spirit, and gets angry if someone objects. But the whole methodology is wrong. Why?

Even when the hypothesizing is excluded and all passages are interpret in harmony with doctrines that have already been established, the method is flawed, because those already established doctrines were established in the same way, inductively, back to the beginning. The starting point of the process is what is merely assumed using the inductive method. Historically theologians who have advocated the inductive process often do not mean it but only occasionally approach it in practice. Charles Hodge is an example, who has been cited as professing to use the inductive method.

The point of all this is that the fundamental doctrines really are foundational to the theological method. The principle of interpreting consistent with fundamental foundational doctrines is known as analogia fide .

But how are the fundamentals themselves to be established? Does that not depend on one's interpretive method? Or does it depend on orthodox tradition? Or does it depend on something else? No. That is why for real Christians it is analogia fide, something essential to Christian faith that is determinative, which to deny, a person is not a Christian.

The right method accepts everything that is essential to saving faith to be fundamental. This includes belief in God and his attributes, the deity of Jesus, his being Messiah, his death for sin to save those who put their faith Him, his resurrection from the dead, and justification of the believer entirely by a righteousness that is not his own.

The right method rejects the denial of anything that Scripture says is true. This includes that people can be Christians and deny that God came in the flesh, or deny that they have personal sin, or be Christians without loving Christ.

A person may have saving faith without necessarily being able to give an articulate statement of what is involved. There is a difference between what is logically thought through and what is implicit in the heart and mind.

But wait a moment. Doesn't accepting the deity of Christ assume what is to be demonstrated, reasoning in a circle? That is not the idea at all. Faith is not to be treated as necessarily contrary to reason. What is meant is that one does not reason with a contrary presupposition, that the deity of Christ may be false, that it has to be proved by deduction from biblical data to be true. But the question is moot, since Christ's full deity is so easily demonstrated from Scripture. But following this question one may raise the question again, why a book on Christ's deity if it is so easily and simply demonstrable. It is not because there is any difficulty establishing that it is true, but that it is not simple to give a rational account for Christ's deity.

How does one proceed on this basis? How does one go about deducing doctrine? Historically, doctrine has been expounded topically, according to the departments of systematic theology: Theology Proper, Divine Revelation, Anthropology, Hamartiology, Christology and Atonement, Soteriology, and Eschatology. But topics within these are interwoven, so this is clearly inadequate. And this has been recognized too. Theologians have recognized it implicitly in the concept of progressive revelation, with studies entitled "Theology of the Old Testament" and the like.

There is also Historical-Grammatical Interpretation. When we speak of Historical-Grammatical Interpretation, part of

it involves interpretation of biblical passages with a presupposed theology of what was revealed prior to the passage being written. That is part of the context. Thus, to interpret passages to construct a sound systematic theology there has to be a progressive construction down through history as the truth is revealed gradually - without preconceived ideas - but at the same time consistent with the fundamentals. One serious mistake is to think that so-called Biblical Theology is foundational to systematic theology. But Biblical Theology is not something on which there are agreed principles. Instead there needs to be a self-conscious systematic development from Scripture in conjunction with *analogia fidei*. This can incorporate much of the results of the study of Biblical Theology. But it must be a systematic theological construction from Scripture as it has come down progressively stage by stage. Yes, a "Theology of the Old Testament," but systematically conceived. Part of the problem is people intruding later doctrines into earlier revelation. Actually earlier stages of theology derived entirely from what is written at an earlier stage of revelation is necessarily incomplete though true.

***5* Method of Analysis**

Understanding of a subject is attained by analysis and synthesis. Analysis is the process of breaking a subject of study down into its separable constituent parts. Synthesis is the integration of the constituent parts of a subject into a coherent whole. Each of these must be done accurately to get a true understanding.

On the subject of Christ's deity analysis determines what elements are logically necessary to explain the biblical facts, thus going from the those facts to component elements that need to be put together into the coherent whole. This was attempted in the theology constructed step by step in the early centuries of the church. Though they came to some valid basic conclusions the early church did

not carry through and draw explicit conclusions from what necessarily followed from what it stated. That needs to be done, and it is attempted here.

***6* Christ's Deity and the Trinity**

Christ is the ultimate revelation of God. Jesus pointed people to Scripture, but the Old Testament Scripture gives only the foundation. It tells of Christ. And in Christ there is the more complete revelation of God. So correct understanding of Christology reveals to Christians how to understand God, not the other way around. What happens is incorrectly understanding Christology in terms of philosophical and theologically presumed definitions of God. What this means is that theology proper needs to be constructed in two stages. The Old Testament is foundational to understanding the Trinity and Christology. But the second completes the understanding by more precisely defining the divine attributes as they relate to the person of the God-man.

When we think about the necessity of developing systematic theology in stages of revelation it should be obvious that Christology is foundational to a complete construction of theology proper because of the necessary input to it from the final revelation of God in Christ. But if this is so, then basic Christology must precede a final treatment and understanding of the doctrine of God. This "Christological" idea, however, has been much abused with all kinds of heretical notions. Jesus upheld divine revelation of the Holy Written Word of God, whereas modern pseudo-Christologies do the opposite, insinuating that God can only be understood entirely in terms of Jesus. Maybe this last thought takes us too far afield, but just mouthing the word "Christological" can easily lead to heresy. The heretics could care less about deriving their views from Old Testament Scripture like Jesus did and advocated.

In this book we will proceed by stating the facts of Scripture concerning the deity of Christ and the Trinity (Chapter 2). Then the basic positive explanation is given for the ontology of Christ and the Trinity (Chapter 3). Historically the basic ontology that was concluded in councils of the early church can be shown to be the same (Chapter 4). But now the result of a more consistent explanation makes possible a full explanation of the ontology of the one true God (Chapter 5). The more consistent explanation makes possible the resolution of remaining questions and objections (Chapter 6).

****CHAPTER 2** BIBLICAL FACTS - THE MYSTERY OF THE TRINITY AND THE DEITY OF CHRIST**

Absolutely essential to giving a logically consistent account of the Christian's hope is the identity and character of the being of God, the one that Jesus called his Father, and how it can be that the Son can be from heaven and be God and yet live as a man, and what the relation of the Holy Spirit is to both of these. These are questions of ontology, how the existence of these is to be understood. So in this book we will concentrate on the ontology of Christ and God.

What the Bible actually states about God, the Father, the Holy Spirit and the Son, and about Christ seem to be impossible to harmonize. They are taken on faith by Christians and called a mystery. The starting point is to identify those things Scripture states as a matter of fact and the difficulty that one must face to harmonize these facts. This is what we lay out in this chapter. What are actually stated as a matter of fact should be carefully distinguished from doctrinal conclusions that follow by deduction from the facts so that human processes of doctrinal construction are not intermixed with biblical statements.

Scripture declares the one true God to be self-identified as the LORD (Yahweh, Jehovah). So when we examine the biblical facts, this is the first primary fact. In the New Testament God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit are prominent. The biblical facts

concerning the identities of these and their relationship to the LORD (Yahweh, Jehovah) need to be established without calling on presupposed Christian truth. This leads to assertions that seem to be inconsistent with each other so that it is at first a mystery how they can be harmonized. The first of these facts is that Jesus is identified in the New Testament to be the LORD (Yahweh, Jehovah) of the Old Testament. But then it is also a fact that in the New Testament God the Father is also referred to as the LORD (Yahweh, Jehovah). So the first thought is that the Father and Jesus are to be identified with each other. However, it is also a fact that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are distinct from each other. So here is another mystery, how they both can be the LORD (Yahweh, Jehovah), yet distinct. On the other hand, the Old Testament confession repeated by Jesus is very clear that the LORD God is a single LORD (Yahweh, Jehovah). So in the biblical record there is yet another mystery of three that are distinct from one another in one Yahweh God. An additional fact in Scripture is that Father, Son and Holy Spirit have the same essential divine attributes in line with the oneness of Yahweh God.

By the way, in translations in English of the Old Testament Scripture the name for God is rendered LORD (in full caps) but sometimes it is rendered Jehovah that gives an incorrect pronunciation, which best scholarship indicates should be indicated by Yahweh. In this book we will use Yahweh for the divine name that God gives for Himself.

But there is yet another mystery. How can Scripture declare that God is invisible, but Yahweh is seen visibly in the Old Testament record? This is a fact that seems to involve a direct contradiction. And, of course, Jesus is declared to be Yahweh yet visible and at the same time a real man sent as God's Messiah.

There are, of course, very many facts stated about God and Christ in Scripture. In this book we are concerned mainly with the ontological facts, and how the doctrine derived

from Scripture with regard to God and Christ is to be understood.

We will now proceed to document what as a matter of fact is stated in Scripture related to the ontology of God and Christ.

***1* The One True Existing God, Yahweh**

1. God reveals Himself using the name Yawheh (LORD, Jehovah) of Himself.

First, God states his name:

Exod. 3:15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

Here in this passage the English word LORD in the translation is YHWH with vowels a and e resulting in Yahweh. That is the divine name by which the God of the Old Testament identifies Himself.

This name seems strange to us because it is a unique name given by God Himself in the Hebrew language. But we should accept this because that is the way God has given it.

Isa. 42:8 I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

The word YHWH in transcription in English letters is rendered LORD in all caps. In the original form of the Hebrew Old Testament, because of the nature of the language, it was not necessary to indicate the vowels but only consonants were used. Supplying vowels, the most accepted rendering for this is Yahweh. That is what will be used for the divine name throughout this book. So

whenever LORD appears in translation it will be referred to as Yahweh.

The following is a brief explanation of the form of the divine name YHWH. This does not correspond exactly to the verb HYH, "to be," but rather to HWH. HWH is the verb "to be" in Aramaic but not Hebrew. Why this is important is that it is often supposed that the divine name is "I AM." In Hebrew the closest form of HYH to the divine name would be YHYH. But the vowel would be different, which is an "i." in the verb. It would be Yihyeh (the causitive Hiphil form). This is inconsistent with the shortened form of YHWH, YH, Yah, in which the vowel is an "a." The shortened form Yah actually appears in the statement of praise, Hallelu Yah, which demonstrates that the vowel cannot be an "i." This indicates that Yahweh is not based on the verb, though it is related in significance. The divine name appears to be unique. (By the way, we should not sing, "Halleuyeh" but "Halleuyah" to praise the LORD, Yah.)

God actually has referred to Himself in a number of different ways. This is shown in Exod. 6:2-3

Exod. 6:2 And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the LORD [Yahweh]:

3 And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty ['El Shaddai], but by my name JEHOVAH [Yahweh] was I not known to them.

It is true that in explaining who He is God says "I am that I am" (Exod. 3:14), 'ehyeh 'asher 'ehyeh in Hebrew. There the word for "I am" is not YHWH but AHYH. God is not giving the divine name in this statement but explaining something about who He is. It is explanatory of his name. It indicates that its significance is that the name means self-existence and independence.

What about the New Testament? In the New Testament the

usual translation of the divine name Yahweh is the Greek kurios, which properly means one who has an elevated position. This meaning corresponds to the Hebrew Adon. In the Old Testament the word Adonai and Yahweh appear together as separate words in English in the name "Lord GOD." The rendering for Adonai in the Greek translation of the Old Testament is the Greek despotes along with kurie (form of kurios) for Yahweh. In the English translations LORD and GOD in full caps indicates the divine name Yahweh. So "Lord GOD" appears in the English translations for despotes kurie. The word despotes was used referring to one who has dominion, similar to kurios. It signifies ownership.

This all seems quite technical, but the divine name Yahweh is extremely important. It appears over 6000 times in the Old Testament and identifies the one true divine being. About half the time it appears as Yahweh God and half the time as Lord Yahweh.

In the Bible as well as in ordinary contemporary speech there are different names for people. We distinguish proper names, titles, and character names. A proper name of something indicates its identity. For example the word man refers to a person but it not a name. For it to be a proper name it in itself has to refer to a particular person. For example, when Joseph Williams is used of a particular man of that name, it identifies him as distinct from other men. Yahweh is the proper name for the one true divine being. "God" is not. But there is another kind of name besides proper names. There are titular names, or simply titles. These are names of positions that people have. For example, when a person is referred to as Mister President, it refers to a particular person, but is not a proper name. It refers to his position. In addition to these there are character names. These are names referring to a particular person by combination of references to single out a person by their character. For example, Peter the Compassionate. A

common proper name or title is used in combination with a word indicating a particular character for that particular person. In Scripture all three types of names are used.

Yahweh is a proper name and identifier of the one true divine being. The word God is a title referring to the position of a being real or imaginary. Character names of Yahweh reveal things about the character and nature of Yahweh. For example, Yahweh Yireh (Yahweh who Sees) refers to God having the capability of seeing individual persons and acts.

For reference we adapt from another source lists of names. The lists are very good though the author doesn't entirely distinguish the types of names of God (allaboutgod.com).

**** The Proper Name of God***

"YAHWEH" is the Hebrew word for God found more often in the Old Testament than any other name for God (approximately 7,000 .times). The title is also referred to as the "Tetragrammaton," meaning the "The Four Letters". Yahweh comes from the Hebrew verb "to be" and is the special name that God revealed to Moses at the burning bush. "And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'; and He said, thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you . . . this is My eternal name, and this is how I am to be recalled for all generations'" (Exodus 3:14-15).

Notice the elision in what the author cites. It is not I AM that God designates as his eternal name but YHWH (and it is not YHVV).

Therefore, Yahweh declares His absolute being - the source of everything, without beginning and without end. The Jews stopped pronouncing this name by about 200 A.D., out of fear of breaking the commandment

"You shall not take the name of Yahweh your God in vain" (Exod. 20:7). (Today's rabbis typically use "Adonai" in place of Yahweh.)

The vowels for Adonai (Lord) were placed together with the consonants YHWH resulting in something that is not a name at all, but when transcribed into English is Jehovah. That is definitely not the name of Yahweh God. We will use the proper transcription, Yahweh. As mentioned in most translations of the Bible into English YHWH is always set down as LORD or GOD in all capitals which always makes it possible to know when the divine name Yahweh is being used. But when it is capitalized with small letters, "Lord," it is a translation of Adonai instead. And, of course, when "God" without all caps is in the translation it is not a rendition of Yahweh.

****Positional Names or Titles of Yahweh***

Again from the same author with other "names" for Yahweh he continues:

"ELOHIM" (or Elohay) is the first name for Yahweh found in the Bible, and it's used throughout the Old Testament over 2,300 times. Elohim comes from the Hebrew root meaning "strength" or "power", and has the unusual characteristic of being plural in form. In Genesis 1:1, we read, "In the beginning Elohim created the heaven and the earth." Right from the start, this plural form for Yahweh is used to describe the one true divine being, a mystery that is uncovered throughout the rest of the Bible.

That the word Elohim is not a proper name is shown by the fact that the very same word is used to refer to the many false gods of the nations of the world. Jesus made clear that even men can properly be called gods. Jesus pointed this out to the Pharisees as stated in John 10:34:

John 10:34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

was citing Psa. 82:6 and Isa. 41:23:

Psa. 82:6 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.

Isa. 41:23 Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together.

This shows very definitely that word God itself does not always inherently refer to a supernatural being. It rather refers to a being that has great religious authority over men. So it is rather a title for a position, rather than an ontological term. Failure to recognize this distinction leads to all kinds of misunderstanding.

"EL" is another name used for God in the Bible, showing up about 200 times in the Old Testament. El is the simple form arising from Elohim.

"ELAH" is another name for God, used about 70 times in the Old Testament.

ADONAI (literally "my Lords") is plural for ADON (meaning "lord," "master," "owner"). This name is used only of Yahweh and in combination with the divine name.

****Character Names for Yahweh***

Here are some examples of character names for Yahweh used in Scripture:

Yahweh Elohim - LORD God: (Genesis 2:4). Yahweh M'kadesh - The LORD Who Makes Holy: (Ezekiel 37:28). Yahweh Yireh - The LORD Who Sees/provides:

(Genesis 22:14). Yahweh Nissi - The LORD My Banner:
 (Exodus 17:15). Yahweh Shalom - The LORD Of Peace:
 (Judges 6:24). Yahweh Tzidkaynu - The LORD Our
 Righteousness: (Jeremiah 33:16). Yahweh O'saynu - The
 LORD our Maker: (Psalm 95:6).

Here are character names with Elohim to describe certain
 characteristics of God.

Some examples: Elohay Kedem - God of the Beginning:
 (Deuteronomy 33:27). Elohay Mishpat - God Of Justice:
 (Isa. 30:18). Elohay Selichot - God Of Forgiveness:
 (Nehemiah 9:17). Elohay Marom - God Of Heights:
 (Micah 6:6). Elohay Mikarov - God Who Is Near:
 (Jeremiah 23:23). Elohay Mauzi - God Of My Strength:
 (Psalm 43:2). Elohay Tehilati - God Of My Praise:
 (Psalm 109:1). Elohay Yishi - God Of My Salvation:
 (Psalm 18:46). Elohim Kedoshim - Holy God: (Leviticus
 19:2, Joshua 24:19). Elohim Chaivism - Living God:
 (Jeremiah 10:10). Elohay Elohim - God Of Gods:
 (Deuteronomy 10:17).

El is often combined with other words for descriptive
 emphasis.

Some examples: El HaNe'eman - The Faithful God:
 (Deuteronomy 7:9). El HaGadol - The Great God:
 (Deuteronomy 10:17). El HaKadosh - The Holy God:
 (Isaiah 5:16). El Yisrael - The God Of Israel: (Psalm
 68:35). El HaShamayim - The God Of The Heavens:
 (Psalm 136:26). El De'ot - The God Of Knowledge: (1
 Samuel 2:3). El Emet - The God Of Truth: (Psalm, 31:6).
 El Yeshuati - The God Of My Salvation: (Isaiah 12:2). El
 Elyon - The Most High God: (Genesis 14:18). Immanu
 El - God Is With Us: (Isaiah 7:14). El Olam - The God
 Of Eternity (Genesis 21:33). El Echad - The One God:
 (Malachi 2:10).

With Elah we see different attributes of God.

Some examples: Elah Yerush'lem - God of Jerusalem: (Ezra 7:19). Elah Yisrael - God of Israel: (Ezra 5:1). Elah Sh'maya - God of Heaven: (Ezra 7:23). Elah Sh'maya V'Arah - God of Heaven and Earth: (Ezra 5:11).

In examining all the names, only Yahweh itself is the proper divine name. That is the unique name that identifies Him as the divine being.

2. Only Yahweh God exists as the true God.

Contrary to certain modern theologians, Scripture makes clear there are ontological statements about the one true divine being.

Deut. 4:39 Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD [Yahweh, Jehovah] he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else.

Isa. 43:10 Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD [Yahweh, Jehovah], and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

Isa. 45:21 Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD [Yahweh, Jehovah]? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.

22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

These passages are ontological statements, that only Yahweh God exists as the true divine being.

3. Yahweh God's self declaration is that He is self-existent.

God's self-existence is given in his words to Moses

in Exodus 3:14, with which He identifies Himself:

Exod. 3:14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

As mentioned before in Hebrew the words (in transcription) are 'ehyeh 'asher 'ehyeh. The verb "to be" is HYH. This also is a statement of Yahweh's self-existence. The idea is false that there is no ontological statement concerning Yahweh God in Scripture.

God's self-existence also is evident from the fact that only Yahweh (LORD, Jehovah) is creator of all things. Human beings are often said to create things, but this is completely different from what God does, because human beings only manipulate preexisting matter. Only God creates de novo without depending on something preexisting. And by being creator of everything, Scripture is asserting everything outside of Him is not eternally self-existing. The declaration of Scripture is clear that Yahweh God is the creator, including the heavens as well as the earth:

Gen. 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Isa. 40:28 Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

Isa. 42:5 Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein:

Isa. 45:18 For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else.

God is declared to be the living God who made heaven and earth and all in them:

Acts 14:15 And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are

men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:

Acts 17:24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

Revelation 4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Since all else that exists is not self-existent but created, it follows that only Yahweh God can be and is self-existent.

4. Yahweh God, the divine being, is numerically one.

Scripture also makes clear that there is one and only one divine being.

In Dt. 6:4 the basic confession is given:

Dt. 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD [Yahweh, Jehovah] our God is one LORD:

This declaration is called the "Shema." In the "Shema" the word "one" does not definitively have the meaning of numerical oneness. More literally the Shema is "Hear, O Israel: Yahweh our God Yahweh one." In the Hebrew the word one is 'echad which can indicate a compound unity as well as indicating a singular unity. The same Hebrew word 'echad is used of the "one flesh" of husband and wife; "one people" comprising many individuals; "one voice" of "all the people"; "one cluster of grapes"; and "one stick" joined to "another stick" making a compound "one stick."

So how do we know whether in the "Shema" the oneness of God is singular or compound? The answer is that Jesus

Mark 12:29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

And here Jesus makes clear that Yahweh God is one. But the Greek for one here is *heis*, indicating numerical oneness. The term Lord, the New Testament word used for Yahweh, is therefore numerically one. This is definitive. So this must be accepted as a biblical fact.

***2* Jesus, the Unique Man, God's Messiah**

1. Jesus was a man

(1) He was born.

He exhibited the characteristics of a human being. He was recognized to be a man, with a human body and soul.

Gal. 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law

1Tim. 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

Luke 2:4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Luke 2:40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

Luke 2:52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in

(2) Jesus called Himself a man

John 8:40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

(3) Contemporaries and Scripture call Jesus a man.

Acts 2:22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

Rom. 5:15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

(4) Jesus had a human body in life and in his resurrection.

Luke 24:39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

2. Jesus is declared to be unique, God's Messiah, Christ (Greek christos)

(1) Jesus is declared to be Christ, Messiah

The term Christ, is a translation of Messiah or Meshiach, meaning anointed. It is a title in Scripture referring to anyone who is anointed to be priest or king. But it is used in Scripture for the unique one who will come as both priest and king in the future, and specifically he will be a descendant of King David. And because He is a descendant of King David He is inherently a man.

But the fact that it is a title for indicating a position of priest

Ontology is only associated with the term Christ by implication. Therefore we will only document briefly how it is used.

In the Gospel accounts people believe Jesus to be Christ, which Jesus acknowledges.

Matthew 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Matthew 16:20 Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ. (cf. Mark 8:29; Luke 9:20)

John 1:41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

John 4:42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

John 11:27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

John 20:31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

(2) Jesus is called the "Son of God" as a messianic title.

"Christ" and "Son of God" are continually associated in a most prominent way indicating "Son of God" to be a messianic designation:

Luke 4:41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

Mar 1:1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

John 11:27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

John 20:31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

So we see "Son of God" repeatedly is used in direct association with "Christ" indicating it refers to the Messiah, the Messianic King who was prophesied to come.

John 1:49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

In addition Jesus is called "Son of God" because of his birth:

Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

We may contrast this with what is said of Adam, the first man God created, but nevertheless a unique man.

Luke 3:38 Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.

Jesus is "Son of God" in a unique way by being the only begotten.

John 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

We may note that Jesus continually used the term "Son of Man" of Himself in public, but not "Son of God." Yet it became known from others that He acknowledged being the "Son of God."

***3* Jesus' Preexistenc, Creating Everything**

It is of significance that all things are declared to be made through the agency of Christ Jesus, indicating that He prexisted. This is affirmed in many passages of Scripture.

1 Cor. 8:6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

Eph. 3:9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

Col. 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Heb. 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Heb. 2:10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons into glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

So in many passages of the Bible it is stated as a fact through Jesus God's Son everything that exists in the world was made through Him.

Finally everything that was made is declared to be by the Word, who was made human in Jesus:

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

This is identified as the one who was made flesh and clearly refers to Christ Jesus:

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Therefore Jesus in his person was the same as the Word who was in the beginning with God as God and created everything corresponding to what is said in the other passages.

***4* Jesus Yahweh**

Here we adapt material from Stephen E. Jones' "Jesus is Jehovah," using much of his wording except that we use the word Yahweh rather than Jehovah which definitely has the wrong vowels for the divine name. The facts of Scripture here are of the greatest importance.

1. First there are many exact corresponding expressions used of both Jesus and Yahweh God of the Old Testament.

There are numerous correspondences predicated of both Jesus in the New Testament and Yahweh God in the Old Testament. These correspondences in the nature of the case do not apply to any other than these persons in Scripture: Jesus and Yahweh God of the Old Testament. This is of supreme significance. It is pervasive and without question by mere numbers of correspondences that Jesus in what He is stated to be is the same as the one identified as Yahweh God of the Old Testament.

(1) Jesus claimed to be "I AM". In various passages where "I am he" appears in translation the words in the original Greek of those verses is ego eimi - "I am" - with no "he." Jesus also claimed to be Yahweh when He walked on the stormy sea and told the disciples in their sinking boat: "Take heart; it is I" (ego eimi - "I AM").

(2) Jesus claimed to be "the Good Shepherd." He is the "Great Shepherd of the sheep," "the Shepherd," "the Chief Shepherd." But in the Old Testament Yahweh is the Shepherd of His sheep.

(3) Jesus is the Savior. But in the Old Testament Yahweh is the "Savior" and besides Him "there is no savior."

(4) "Glory" is ascribed to Jesus. But in the Old Testament Yahweh said that He would not give His glory to another.

(5) Jesus is "the Lord of glory." But in the Old Testament Yahweh is "the King of glory" (Psa. 24:10).

(6) Jesus is "Lord of all." But in the Old Testament Yahweh is "the Lord of all the earth."

(7) Jesus is the "Lord of lords, and King of kings." But in the Old Testament Yahweh is the "Lord of lords."

(8) Jesus claimed to be "the first and the last." But in the Old Testament Yahweh is the first and the last. And there cannot be two firsts and lasts!

(9) In the beginning the pre-incarnate Word already was. The Son is "before all things." He is eternal. But in the Old Testament Yahweh is eternal.

(10) Jesus is the "Holy One" and "the Holy and Righteous One." But in the Old Testament Yahweh is "the Holy One." There are not two ones who are "the Holy" one.

(11) The Son created all things. Yet Yahweh/God created all things.

(12) Jesus will be the Judge of all. Yet Yahweh is to be the Judge of all.

(13) Jesus is worshipped. But only Yahweh/God should be worshipped.

(14) Jesus is prayed to and answers prayer to Himself.

(15) Jesus' name is to be called upon to be saved as was Yahweh's name to be called upon in the Old Testament to be saved.

(16) Jesus never prayed to "Yahweh" ("LORD") but to "Father" and once to "God" when on the Cross, quoting Psalm 22:1.

These and more cannot apply to someone other than Yahweh God of the Old Testament.

2. Passages in the Old Testament about Yahweh are applied directly to Jesus.

Even more definitive, rather than being mere correspondences, in these passages there is a citation directly and definitively identifying Jesus with Yahweh in the Old Testament Scripture. Where there are places where there are only corresponding expressions, in these there is direct identification.

(1) The glory of Yahweh

John 12:41 = Isa. 6:1-10

John in John 12:37-41 quotes from Isaiah 6:1-10 where Isaiah saw the LORD (Yahweh) of hosts' glory, and states that it was Jesus whose glory Isaiah saw and spoke of.

John 12:37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart,

and be converted, and I should heal them.

41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

Isa. 6:1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart and convert, and be healed.

(2) Preparation for the way of Yahweh

Matthew 3:1-3; Mark 1:2-4; Luke 3:2-4; John 1:19-23 =
Isa. 40:3

All four gospels state that John the Baptist's preaching in the wilderness was the fulfillment of Isaiah 40:3,

"Prepare . . . the way of the LORD (Yahweh) . . . our God."
But the "the LORD (Yahweh) God" who John prepared the way for was Jesus! John's ministry applies to the coming of Jesus (cf. Luke 20:1ff).

Matthew 3:1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Mark 1:2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

Luke 3:2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, peaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

John 1:19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself.

23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

Isa. 40:3 The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare

ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

(3) Yahweh's glory seen

John 12:41 = Isa. 6:1-10

In John's Gospel the LORD who glory is seen by Isaiah and spoken of is identified as Jesus' glory in John 12:41.

John 12:35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

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Isa. 6:1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

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3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

(4) Yahweh a stone of stumbling

1Pet. 2:8 = Isa. 8:13-14

Peter in 1Pet. 2:8 quotes Isaiah 8:13-14 about "the LORD (Yahweh) of hosts" who will be "a stone of stumbling" and "a rock of offence" to Israel, and applies it to Jesus who is "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence" to Israel.

1Pet. 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them

which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

Isa. 8:13 Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.

14 And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

(5) Yahweh pierced

John 19:34-37; Rev. 1:7 = Zechariah 12:10

In Zechariah 12:10 "the LORD (Yahweh)" predicts that "the inhabitants of Jerusalem . . . shall look unto me whom they have pierced." Throughout the chapter the one who speaks as "I" is Yahweh. This was fulfilled by Jesus being "pierced" by nails and a spear on the Cross (John 19:34-37; Rev. 1:7), But the one pierced is "me," Yahweh.

John 19:34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

Revelation 1:7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

Zechariah 12:10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

(6) Yahweh appraised for thirty pieces of silver

Matthew 26:15; 27:9 = Zechariah 11:13

In Zechariah 11:13 "the LORD (Yahweh)" predicts that the "price that I was prized at by them" [the "shepherds" of "the flock" - vv. 8,12] was "thirty pieces of silver." This was fulfilled by the Jewish religious leaders paying Judas "thirty pieces of silver" for betraying Jesus to them (Matthew 26:15; 27:9).

The "I" refers to Jesus who was appraised to be worth the thirty pieces of silver. "The LORD" is speaking to the one who refers to himself as me who is to cast the pieces down, referring to Judas and refers to Himself as the one being so appraised. So Jesus is Yahweh who is speaking in the passage.

Matthew 26:15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

Matthew 27:9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value;

Zechariah 11:13 And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD.

Matthew refers to Jeremiah, but it is actually Zechariah which gives the exact wording. This has been explained. References to the potter and potter's field are in Jeremiah as well as Zechariah so Jeremiah is the place to start in understanding the prophecy. Also the Bible was collected in a number of different scrolls, one of which started with Jeremiah but included Zechariah. So referring to Jeremiah would indicate the collection of prophets from which the prophecy and the citation were made.

(7) Creation by Yahweh

Heb. 1:10-12 = Psa. 102:25-27

The writer to the Hebrews quotes Psalm 102:25-27, which is part of a prayer to the LORD (Yahweh) (Psa. 102:1), and applies to "the Son" (Heb. 1:8), in Heb. 1:10-12:

Heb. 1:10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:

11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

Psa. 102:19 For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;

20 To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death;

21 To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem

22 When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

23 He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days.

24 I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations.

(The above shows the context for the citation, demonstrating that it is Yahweh who is being referred to throughout.)

25 Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.

26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:

27 But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

(8) The first and the last.

Rev. 1:17-18; 2:8; 22:13, 16 = Isa. 41:4; 44:6; 48:12, 17

The identification of "first and last," "alpha and omega" is a direct identification with Yahweh.

Jesus claimed to be "the first and the last" (Rev. 1:17-18; 2:8; 22:13). But the LORD (Yahweh) is the first and the last (Isa. 41:4; 44:6; 48:12,17). And there cannot be two firsts and the lasts! Jesus also claimed to be "the Alpha and the Omega" (Rev. 21:6; 22:13). But "the Lord God . . . the Almighty" is "the Alpha and the Omega" (Rev. 1:8).

Rev. 1:17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

Rev. 2:8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;

Rev. 22:13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Isa. 41:4 Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he.

Isa. 44:6 Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.

Isa. 48:12 Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last.

(9) Calling on the name of Yahweh

Acts 2:21 & Rom. 10:13 = Joel 2:32

Both Peter and Paul apply Joel 2:32, "whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD

(Yahweh) shall be delivered" to Jesus: "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21; Rom. 10:13).

Acts 2:21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Rom. 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Joel 2:32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

The context for Acts is:

Acts 2:14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man

approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

The context in Romans shows the connection:

Rom. 10:8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Here the context is the Lord Jesus, who is the one referred to as "him" in verses 11 and 12, and consequently the Lord in v 13. This passage is most significant because it is says that it is confessing that Jesus is Yahweh that saves. The implication is that there is no salvation apart from that confession.

(10) Glorifying in Yahweh

1Cor 1:30-31 = Jer 9:24

Paul in 1Cor 1:30-31 quotes Jer 9:24 "but let him that glorieth glory in this . . . that I am the LORD (Yahweh)" and applies it to "Christ Jesus."

1Cor. 1:30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

Jer 9:24 But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

(11) Every knee bowing to Yahweh

Rom. 14:11 = Isa. 45:23

Paul quotes Isaiah 45:23 where the LORD (Yahweh) predicts that, "unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" and twice applies it to Jesus, in Romans 14:11 and Philippians 2:10.

Consequently there is an identification of Jesus with the LORD (Yahweh).

Rom. 14:9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

Phil. 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Isa. 45:21 Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none

beside me.

22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

23 I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

(12) Every tongue confessing

Phil. 2:10 = Isa. 45:23

The confession Jesus is Lord is connected with the LORD (Yahweh) by substituting Jesus for the one speaking as LORD in Isaiah 45:23.

Phil. 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Isa. 45:21 Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.

22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

23 I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

(13) Yahweh ascended on high

Eph. 4:8 = Psal. 68:18

Paul in Ephesians 4:8 quotes Psalm 68:18 about "the LORD (Yahweh) referred to as Adonai" having "ascended on high" and applies it to Jesus having "ascended on high." Though

there is not a direct attribution to the LORD (Yahweh), yet in the context Adonai can be none other than Yahweh God, referred to as "God."

Eph. 4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

Psa. 68:16 Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell in it for ever.

17 The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.

18 Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them.

(14) Tempting Yahweh

1Cor 10:9 = Num 21:6

In Num. 21:5-6 the LORD God was tempted and this is applied to Christ in 1Cor. 10:9.

1Cor 10:9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

Num 21:5 And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread.

6 And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.

***5* God the Father Yahweh**

It was seen before that Jesus referred to God the Father as the one true God. In the passage below "Lord" (kurios) in the words Lord God (kurios theos in Greek) must refer to Yahweh. It can't refer to any other being that would have authority to do what is said He does.

Luke 1:32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

Here the one called the Lord God gives something to one that is other than Himself who is called "Son." This would indicate that "Lord God" does not refer to Jesus, but to God the Father. And "Lord God" is clearly a reference to Yahweh Elohim of the Old Testament.

This is the only passage in the New Testament where Lord and God appear together and unambiguously could refer to God the Father as Yahweh.

But it is clear that when Jesus refers to his Father He is referring to Him as the one true God, Yahweh. This is so clear it does not need to be documented here.

Note on The Holy Spirit

A final note about the Holy Spirit is that the Holy Spirit is also portrayed as both personal and deity. One passage is sufficient to show both his deity and the personal selfhood.

Acts 5:3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

Here the Holy Spirit is identified as a personal entity who can be lied to indicating that He is a personal self, but in addition this personal self is deity, designated God. Our purpose here is to give an account for Christ's deity, so we will not go into the deity of the Holy Spirit.

In the term Lord God in the New Testament the word Lord is the word kurios which is the normal Greek term as a

translation of the Hebrew tetragramaton (Yahweh). When this clearly refers to God the Father it would identify the Father as Yahweh.

***6* Distinctness of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit**

God the Father, and Jesus, now both identified as Yahweh, and the Holy Spirit are distinct Selves.

There are instances in Scripture where one different from Yahweh acts and is identified as Yahweh. We have already seen the distinction in the preceding point. Another author has put it this way:

In the account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham addressed his three visitors collectively as "Yahweh" and later Yahweh on earth made it rain sulphur and fire from Yahweh in heaven. "Yahweh" sends "Yahweh." And "Yahweh" says to Satan, "Yahweh rebuke thee, O Satan." The "Spirit of Yahweh/God" is Yahweh, yet is distinct from Yahweh. The angel of Yahweh God speaks and acts as Yahweh God; this angel has Yahweh's name in him and is directly called "Yahweh" or "God."

But most important are the biblical facts, showing that God the Father, Jesus, now identified as Yahweh God, and the Holy Spirit are distinct selves, distinct "I's" and not mere designations for one ontological entity in different roles. We simply exhibit these facts below.

Scripture presents the Father, the Son and the Spirit as selves, self-conscious entities that distinguish themselves from the others and communicate with the others as an "I" to a "You" or "Thou" or they speak of the others as distinct from themselves as an "I" of a "He." So they are not just distinct entities, but distinct personal entities. Scripture expresses of these in different ways.

1. Each self speaks to another as distinct from Himself.

(1) Jesus addresses God the Father as another than Himself.

Jesus had glory *with* another whom He addresses as Father and God.

John 17:5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

Jesus, who is Himself Yahweh, prays to another, God the Father.

Matt. 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

26 Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.

Matt. 26:39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

John 11:41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

John 12:27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

(2) The Father addresses Jesus as another distinct from Himself.

One who must be a father and so God the Father addresses another, Jesus as "Son," who Himself according to the biblical testimony is Yahweh.

In response to Jesus' prayer to God the Father, the voice of the Father from heaven refers to Himself as "I."

John 12:28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

But the Father as a voice from heaven also speaks at Jesus' baptism:

Matt. 3:16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Mark 1:11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Luke 3:22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

We cannot conclude anything other than that it is God the Father with this voice.

(3) The Holy Spirit as a distinct self prays to God as another for believers.

Rom. 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

2. The selves have personal love for each other implying they are distinct from each other.

Without distinct personal relations mutual love cannot be said to be exercised.

(1) God the Father loves Jesus as another self from Himself.

John 3:35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things

into his hand.

John 5:20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

John 10:17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

John 17:24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

(2) Jesus loves the God the Father as a self distinct from Himself.

John 14:31 But that the world may know that I love the Father . . .

3. Personal actions imply distinct selves.

(1) God the Father is one who is self-witnessing to Jesus as another.

Jesus, who in Scripture is identified as Yahweh, distinguishes the Father from himself when he says that there is another who bears witness of him.

John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him

John 5:32 There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

John 8:18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

(2) Jesus came forth from another who is distinct from Himself.

John 6:38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

(3) All things were made by the Father through Christ Jesus, making Him distinct from the Father.

We saw this before. This could not be, if he were not in some respect distinct from him.

4. Many biblical passages indicate other personal distinctions between the different selves of the Father and Son, but also the Holy Spirit.

Matt. 4:1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 5:20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

John 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 15:26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

16 A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.

A whole separate book could be written on the personal deity of the Holy Spirit, but it is beyond the scope of this book to address that.

5. There is a declared distinction implied in the one called Word, that is distinct from God, who becomes flesh.

The Word (Logos) which is the same entity as the Jesus (v 14-15) and through whom all things were made but is distinct from another called God as shown by the fact that

the entity called the Word is *with* this other entity.

John 1:1: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

It is the Word made flesh that John the Baptist bore witness to in the way he did. And that was Jesus. The Word made flesh is clearly the man Jesus in this context. So there is an identification of what is called Word (Logos) that is stated to be God with Jesus Himself. John the Baptist also referred to Him as the Son of God in v 34.

John 1:34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

6. Messianic passages indicate a distinction between Yahweh God and the Jesus the Messiah who in a previous section was also identified to be Yahweh. (We have borrowed some here from another author.)

Another author brings out other ways in which God the Father is also identified as Yahweh.

God the Father is Yahweh distinct from the Son.

(1) Heb. 1:5 is a direct quote from Ps. 2:7; "I will declare the decree: Yahweh hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." The first "I" here refers to Jesus speaking through prophecy in which he declares that Yahweh is his Father! This identifies Jesus' Father as Yahweh.

(2) Is. 42:21 teaches us that Jesus is Yahweh's servant. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles."

The one speaking throughout the passage is identified as Yahweh (the LORD). The servant of Yahweh is distinct from the one identified as Yahweh, which by implication is the Father since the servant is identified as Son.

(3) And again in Is. 49:5-6, "And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength. And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth."

If the one who is the servant here is the Son, this identifies Yahweh who formed him from the womb with God the Father. He is to be identified with the Son because it is the Son who is given as a light to the Gentiles in order to be salvation to the end of the earth. The word "Son" itself is not used in the passage, only "being formed from the womb" to be a servant. So it has to be reasoned out that the LORD (Yahweh) that did the forming from the whom is acting as a father producing a

son.

(4) Ps. 2:2 reads, “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against Yahweh, and against his anointed.”

Yahweh's “anointed” is Jesus, making a clear distinction between the two, so that Jesus' Father is the Yahweh. The implication is that Yahweh is the Father, since Jesus is the Messiah, the anointed of his Father, and not the Yahweh that is his anointed.

Peter applied this prophecy to Jesus in Acts 4:26; “The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against Yahweh, and against His Messiah.” The Yahweh that Peter refers to is distinct from his Messiah.

What the above passages do is distinguish the Messiah from another identified as Yahweh. But they do not show that Messiah is not also Yahweh. This is very significant because the one who is another than the Messiah identified as Yahweh should be the one in the New Testament identified as God the Father.

(5) Ps. 110:1 also distinguishes the two; “Yahweh said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” In Mt.22:41-46, Jesus reveals this “lord” to be himself, the Messiah.

The one distinct from Jesus is Yahweh, who is Jesus' Father.

(6) In Acts 3:22,23 Peter quotes from Deut. 18:15,19 proving that Jesus is the “prophet like unto Moses.” Placing the name “Jesus” in brackets clearly shows him not to be Yahweh spoken of.

“Yahweh thy Elohim will raise up unto thee a Prophet [Jesus] from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me [Moses]; unto him [Jesus] ye shall hearken. . . . I [Yahweh] will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee [Moses], and will put my [Yahweh's] words in his [Jesus's] mouth; and he [Jesus]

shall speak unto them all that I [Yahweh] shall command him [Jesus]. . . . And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my [Yahweh's] words which he [Jesus] shall speak in my [Yahweh's] name, I [Yahweh] will require it of him."

Jesus is the Prophet who is distinct from the one who speaks as "I," who by implication must be God, Jesus' Father. Thus Jesus' Father is identified as Yahweh.

(7) Let's treat Is. 53:6, 10 ,12 similarly; "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Yahweh hath laid on him [Jesus] the iniquity of us all. . . Yet it pleased Yahweh to bruise him [Jesus]; he [Yahweh] hath put him [Jesus] to grief: when thou [Yahweh] shalt make his [Jesus's] soul an offering for sin, he [Jesus] shall see his seed, he [Jesus] shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Yahweh shall prosper in his [Jesus's] hand."

The one on whom iniquity is laid, Jesus, is distinct from the Yahweh who lays the iniquity on Him, and so must be the Father Yahweh.

(8) Consider also Pr 30:4; "Who hath ascended up into heaven? who hath gathered the wind in His fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His son's name, if thou canst tell?"

This verse teaches us that the Creator, whoever He is, has a Son. We know that Father Yahweh is the Creator, and here it is stated that this Creator has a Son. The one with the name is distinct from his son, but it is not stated that the son was not involved in the creation. Rather the Father and his Son are simply spoken of together. But there is a reference to Yahweh as Father in relation to a son.

Here above are 8 passages that directly or indirectly identify one called Yahweh as God the Father, distinct from another who is Jesus and his Son.

In conclusion, the biblical fact is that what are designated in Scripture as God the Father and Jesus' Father, Jesus called Son of God who is identified as Yahweh, as well as God the Father being identified as Yahweh, and yet another the Holy Spirit are given to us as distinct personal selves.

7. Those identified as Yahweh with the designations Father and Son (and hence also Holy Spirit) are revealed as existing before creation.

(1) Father and Son are revealed as existing before creation as God and the Word (Logos).

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

The Word (Logos) is God, but distinct from one called God (v 1), but existed before any thing was made.

(2) Father and Son are revealed as existing before creation as distinct but having the same glory.

John 17:5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

Jesus distinguishes Himself from God the Father as a distinct self before the world was.

These facts indicate that what is revealed as God the Father and the Son of God as selves existed as selves before creation.

***7* Attributes of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**

We are laying out quite apart from the interpretation of them the biblical facts concerning those referred to in Scripture as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These are stated as distinct from each other and not merely different names or modes of manifestation or existing of one entity. Yet each have the same attributes of deity.

We take from Bickersteth's book on the Trinity the following comparisons of attributes:

Testimonies to the deity of the Three Divine Persons

1. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are eternal.

(1) Father. I am the first, and I am the last. Isaiah 44:6.
The everlasting God. Romans 16:26.

(2) Son. I am the first and the last. Revelation 1:17. Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Micah 5:2.

(3) Spirit. The eternal Spirit. Heb. 9:14.

The One Eternal is our trust. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. Deuteronomy 33:27.

2. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost created all things.

(1) Father. One God, the Father, of whom are all things. 1 Corinthians 8:6. The Lord. . . it is he that hath made us. Psalm 100:3.

(2) Son. All things were made by him (the Word, etc. John 1:3). By him were all things created, etc. Colossians 1:16.

(3) Spirit. Who hath measured, etc. - who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord? Isaiah 40:13. The Spirit of God hath made me. Job 33:4.

The One Almighty is our trust. Commit the keeping of their souls to him, as unto a faithful Creator. 1 Peter 4:19.

3. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are omnipresent.

(1) Father. Do not I fill the heaven and earth? Said the Lord. Jeremiah 23:24.

(2) Son. Lo, I am with you always. Matthew 28:20.

(3) Spirit. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Psalm 139:7.

The One omnipresent God is our trust. He is not far from every one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being. Acts 17:27, 28.

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4. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are incomprehensible and omniscient.

(1) Father. No one knows the Father, save the Son. Matthew 11:27. Known unto God are all his works, etc. Acts 15:18.

(2) Son. No one knows the Son, save the Father. Matthew 11:27. Lord, thou knoweth all things. John 21:17.

(3) Spirit. Who being his counselor hath taught him? Isaiah 40:13. The Spirit searches all things. 1 Corinthians 2:10.

We worship the One all-seeing God. All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Heb. 4:13.

5. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are true, holy, and good.

(1) Father. He that sent me is true. John 7:28. Holy Father. Righteous Father John 17:11, 25. The Lord is good. Psalm 34:8.

(2) Son. I am . . . the truth. John 14:6. The Holy One and the just. Acts 3:14. The good Shepherd. John 10:11.

(3) Spirit. The Spirit is truth. 1 John 5:6. The Spirit, the holy One. John 14:26. Thy Spirit is good. Psalm 143:10.

We adore the One Lord of infinite goodness. Who shall not fear thee, Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy. Rev. 15:4.

6. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost have each a self-regulating will.

(1) Father. Him that works all things after the counsel of his own will. Ephesians 1:11.

(2) Son. The Son wills to reveal him. Matthew 11:27. Father, I will. John 17:24.

(3) Spirit. Dividing to every one severally as he wills. 1 Cor 12:11.

We rest on the will of him who alone is Jehovah. The will of the Lord be done. Acts 21:14.

7. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are the fountain of life.

(1) Father. With thee is the fountain of life. Psalm 46:9. God hath quickened us. Ephesians 2:4, 5.

(2) Son. In him (the Word) was life. John 1:4. The Son quickens whom he will. John 5:2.

(3) Spirit. The Spirit is life. Romans 8:10. Born of the Spirit. John 3:8.

We depend on one life-giving God. Love the Lord thy God and cleave unto him, for he is thy life. Deuteronomy 30:20.

8. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost strengthen, comfort, and sanctify us.

(1) Father. Thou strengthened me with strength in my soul. Psalm 138:3. I will comfort you. Isaiah 66:13.

Sanctified by God the Father. Jude 1:1.

(2) Son. I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me. Philippians 4:13. If any consolation in Christ.

Philippians 2:1. Sanctified in Christ Jesus. 1 Corinthians 1:2.

(3) Spirit. Strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man. Ephesians 3:16. The Comforter, the Holy Ghost.

John 14:26. Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. Romans 15:16.

We trust in One God for spiritual power. My God, my strength, in whom I will trust. Psalm 18:2.

9. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost fill the soul with divine love.

(1) Father. Every one that loves him that begat. I John 5:1. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 1 John 2:15.

(2) Son. The love of Christ constrains us. 2 Corinthians 5:14. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 16:22.

(3) Spirit. I beseech you for the love of the Spirit. Romans 15:30. Your love in the Spirit. Colossians 1:8.
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The love of the One living and true God character lives the saint. Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. Deut 6:5.

10. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost gave the divine law.

(1) Father. The law of the Lord is perfect. Psalm 19:7. The word of our God. Isaiah 40:8. Thus said the Lord God. Ezekiel 2:4.

(2) Son. The law of Christ. Galatians 6:2. The word of Christ. Colossians 3:16. These things said the Son of God. Revelation 2:18.

(3) Spirit. The law of the Spirit of life. Romans 8:2. Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. 2 Peter 1:21. The Holy Ghost said. Acts 8:2.

The word of One Legislator is the believer's rule. There is one Lawgiver who is able to save. James 4:19.

11. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost dwell in the hearts of believers.

(1) Father. I will dwell in them. 2 Corinthians 6:16. God is in you of a truth. 1 Corinthians 14:25. Our fellowship is with the Father. 1 John 1:3.

(2) Son. Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith. Ephesians 3:17. Christ in you, the hope of glory. Colossians 1:27. Our fellowship with Jesus Christ. 1 John 1:3.

(3) Spirit. The Spirit dwells with you, and shall be in you. John 14:17. The communion of the Holy Ghost. 2 Corinthians 13:14.

The contrite heart receives one divine guest. Thus said the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, I dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble heart. Isaiah 47:15 .

12. The Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost are each by himself, the supreme Yahweh (LORD, Jehovah) and God.

(1) Father. I am Jehovah thy God. Exodus 20:2. Thou, Lord, art most High for evermore. Psalm 92:8.

(2) Son. Jehovah our God. Isaiah 40:3, with Matthew 3:3.

The Highest. Luke 1:76, with Matthew 11:10.

(3) Spirit. Jehovah God. Ezekiel 8:1,3. The Highest. Luke 1:35.

The one supreme Lord God is our God for ever and ever Jehovah, our Elohim, One Jehovah. Deuteronomy 6:4.

We see then that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,

have the same divine attributes, and therefore concur with a mind and will and heart, personally independent but harmonious, in the same divine acts, and are addressed by the same divine name.

Because they all have the same divine attributes each of those designated in Scripture as God the Father, Jesus the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit are Yahweh God. The one ontological God is a triad of distinct entities. These are the facts of Scripture.

***8* Yahweh Invisible and Visible**

That Yahweh is invisible yet visible are both stated facts which are in direct contradiction to each other and therefore are a mystery until a consistent rational account can be given.

1. Yahweh God is invisible

Scripture is very clear that the one true God is invisible.

Jesus declared directly that no one has seen God:

John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

This is repeated in Scripture.

1John 4:12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

2. Yahweh God is visible

There are however statements of Yahweh being seen or Yahweh as such appearing to persons in the Old Testament outside of mere visions.

Persons in Scripture have said that they saw God. And angels and men identified as Yahweh were seen by different people.

(1) Jacob saw God face to face.

Gen. 32:30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

(2) Judges 13:22 And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.

(3) Scripture states Yahweh *appeared* to Abraham:

Gen. 18:1 And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;

(4) The Angel of Yahweh speaks to Hagar who responds to the angel, identified as Yahweh, "Thou God seest me."

Genesis 16:7 And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.

8 And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

9 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.

10 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

11 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.

12 And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

13 And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?

(5) In Genesis it is Yahweh who commands Abraham to take his son Isaac and sacrifice him, but when about to do it, the Angel of Yahweh stops him and refers to Abraham as not withholding his son from Himself, Yahweh.

Gen. 22:11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.

12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

Then the angel speaks and is identified directly as Yahweh.

Gen. 22:15 And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

(6) In Gen. 31:11, the Angel of Jehovah appears to Jacob in a dream who says He is the God of Bethel, which in Gen. 28:11-22 was declared to be Yahweh.

Genesis 31:11 And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I

12 And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstraked, speckled, and grised: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.

13 I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.

Gen. 28:11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that

place to sleep.

12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

13 And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not.

(7) When Jacob wrestled at night with a man and said that he had seen God, Scripture identifies the man as an angel, but Hosea identifies him as Yahweh God of hosts.

Gen. 32:24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.

28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.

30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen

God face to face, and my life is preserved.

So here Jacob wrestled a man but the man said Jacob had power with God, Elohim, and afterward Jacob says he saw God face to face. Yet Hosea identifies the man as an angel.

Hos 12:4 Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us;

5 Even the LORD God of hosts; the LORD is his memorial.

6 Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.

Hosea says this angel was Yahweh God of hosts who spoke to Jacob.

(8) In Genesis 18 it says Yahweh appeared to Abraham.

Genesis 18:1 And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;

In the account of this that follows He comes as one of three men.

Genesis 18:2 And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,

3 And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

4 Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:

5 And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.

6 And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.

7 And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.

8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

9 And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.

10 And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.

11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.

12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?

13 And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?

14 Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

15 Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.

16 And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

(9) Yahweh speaks to Moses face to face

Ex. 33:11 And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.

This is in contrast to others in which it is said only that Yahweh spoke without mention of Him appearing.

Num. 12:5 And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.

6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

7 My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

8 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

(10) The Angel of Yahweh is identified as God by Moses

Exod. 3:2 And the angel of the LORD *appeared* unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.

5 And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

6 Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was *afraid to look upon God*..

Moses took the angel of Yahweh to be God.

15 .And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

16 Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, *appeared* unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt:

Moses is referring back to the incident at the burning bush saying it was Yahweh God who appeared. What is

significant is that Moses identifies the angel that appeared as Yahweh that appeared.

(11) Later Manoah says he and his wife had seen God when they saw the angel of Yahweh.

Jud. 13:20 For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground.

21 But the angel of the LORD did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was an angel of the LORD

22 And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.

(12) The Angel of Yahweh is called the angel of Yahweh's presence or face in Isaiah 63:9.

Isa. 63:7 I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.

8 For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour.

9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

There is no question that time after time one called the Angel of Yahweh is identified as Yahweh, and was visible.

So it is a fact in Scripture that Yahweh is inherently invisible, yet it is stated that Yahweh was seen and so visible. Apart from an explanation this is an irreconcilable contradiction and a mystery.

***9* The Only True God**

It is a fact that Jesus in prayer referred to God the Father as the only true God.

This should be listed as the last of the facts in Chapter 2. With it should be listed the passages in which God and the Lord Jesus Christ are stated together in such a way that they appear to be distinguished. These statements too are facts.

Jesus in his prayer to his Father in John 17:3 said:

John 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

This is an amazing statement, that God the Father, Jesus' Father, is the ONLY true God, when from Jesus' identity as Yahweh we know his deity. So how can it be that Jesus' Father only be God? This involves a contradiction that requires explanation. Until that is done it is a mystery.

This is stated again in a different way by the Apostle Paul in 1Corinthians 8:6:

1Cor. 8:6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

So the mystery is repeated in Scripture.

It may be noted that in the overwhelming majority of cases the word God in the New Testament refers to God the Father, but not as a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, nor a reference to the entire Godhead.

On the other hand Jesus is addressed or recognized as God:

John 20:28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

***10* Denial of the Facts**

The major heresies all involve a denial of the biblical facts concerning the ontology of God and Christ Jesus, in particular denial that Christ Jesus is Yahweh (LORD, Jehovah), thus denying the deity of Christ.

Gnosticism denies Jesus is Yahweh by asserting that he is a lesser God that emanated from Yahweh but is not Yahweh. Adoptionism denies Jesus is Yahweh by asserting that He was a man who was deified, but not the self-existent Yahweh. Unitarianism denies Jesus is Yahweh by asserting that only the Father is Yahweh. Subordinationism denies Jesus is Yahweh by asserting that only the unbegotten is Yahweh. What is called Nestorianism denies Jesus is Yahweh by asserting that He himself as a man is distinct from God who is in Him and so that He Himself is not Yahweh. Arianism denies Jesus is Yahweh by asserting that in his preincarnate state Jesus was a subordinate created god given the power to create the world but so not himself self-existent Yahweh. Docetism denies the biblical fact that Jesus was a man, but God as a phantom. Modernism denies Jesus is Yahweh by asserting the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are other than Yahweh of Scripture.

In modern times modern versions of unitarianism deny the straightforward statements of Scripture using inventive false human reasoning. Christians follow the principle that what Scripture states in its context is to be taken as truth unless there is from Scripture itself something by straightforward deduction that requires a different understanding, or requires terms to be taken metaphorically or figuratively. Unitarians concoct arguments without any valid basis whatever in Scripture. At the present time there are unitarians of various stripes that go under various names. By the way, those that go under the name Unitarian Universalist are neither unitarian in doctrine nor universalists in doctrine. The great majority of them

identify themselves as humanists. Among those who who hold to unitarian doctrine are Christadelphians (christadelphians.org) who hold that Jesus will be a glorified man who will rule over the earth in the future but not God except in the sense of being a mere man representing God. Duncan Hester is a significant writer (wrestedscriptions.com), with a downloadable book. There are other unitarian churches under the name Abrahamic Faith Church of God (biblicalunitarian.com)

One unitarian deceit is to pretend that a creature can be called Yahweh as a surrogate for Yahweh God. Appeal is made that God "places" his name on objects in the world and beings, such as angels, and can do this even of a man. These are "accredited agents that bear his name." On this basis Jesus as a unique but mere man "is worthy of divine honour as the manifestation of God in the flesh." This interpretation is not a biblical fact, but an arbitrary human explanation without biblical justification and is apart from statements given in the text of Scripture or justification from the context. The fact is that Yahweh God is a jealous God and extremely jealous for his name. He will not share it with a creature.

Exodus 34:14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:

Ezek. 39:25 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name;

God's name is his glory, and God states He will not share is glory with another (Isa. 42:8; 48:11)

Psa. 29:2 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

Isa. 42:8 I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

Isa. 48:11 For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do

it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another.

Yahweh God is always opposed to any substitutions of other divine names or objects being used to refer to Himself. The golden calf, for example, was declared by the Israelites who went into idolatry as the God who brought them out of Egypt. The word God is the same word used in the term Yahweh God, 'elohiym. They were not saying that the one golden calf represented plural gods. They were making a physical representation for Yahweh God. This is a direct example of what the unitarians assert, except they say that if God directed it it would have been completely acceptable and even required. But no creature is ever indicated by Scripture to represent God Himself.

Where God's name is placed it only refers to a physical place for people to worship the infinite God. For example, when Solomon dedicated the temple, he definitely rejected that God needed a temple:

1Ki. 8:27 But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?

28 Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee to day:

29 That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place.

The prophets gave God's words but they themselves were never bore the name Yahweh.

Another purely human invention consists of various texts of Scripture being interpreted to be prophetic texts that Jesus in the future eschatological period is to be given the divine

name of Yahweh that applies only to Yahweh God. Jesus will have this name only by application of Yahweh God to a mere creature, a man, but without any implication that Jesus is ontologically God. By the way, this is a serious example of the invalid theological method of theological induction, starting with a hypothesis that is not deduced from the actual text of Scripture. It also violates the principles of clarity. Here the context in each place is contrary to false idea that the creation through Christ Jesus only refers to the new creation. His involvement in creation is always in the past tense. (See section *3* above.)

Finally, another serious heresy is a denial that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are ontologically distinct from each other as Scripture clearly portrays them. This is the error of Modalism, usually referred to as Sabellianism, though Sabellianism as such is one version of Modalism. Modalism holds that the terms Father, Son, and Spirit, are merely names for God appearing and acting in different ways in different times and places in the world. This makes God to be a single person talking to Himself in a manner of taking mere different roles in a cosmic play or drama. It makes God into a deceiver concerning Himself since there is nothing in Scripture to indicate that what He portrays is a single self, but rather that the selves of Father, Son, and Spirit are portrayed to be distinct. Modalism is a rationalistic speculative invention that is not derived from God's revelation of Himself in Scripture. But this invention affects everything else taught in Scripture in a pervasive underlying way when it is applied. It is a serious heresy that contradicts and is incompatible with the facts of Scripture.

***11* Summary**

(1) The true God reveals Himself using the name Yawheh (LORD, Jehovah) of Himself. Only Yahweh God exists as the true God. Yahweh God's self declaration is that

He is self-existent. Yahweh God, the divine being, is numerically one. So Yahweh God is revealed in Scripture with the name Yahweh (LORD, Jehovah) as the one and only true self-existent God

(2) Jesus was human. Jesus is declared to be unique, God's Messiah, Christ (Greek christos), descended as a man from King David.

(3) The one who became the man Jesus existed as the Word (Logos, in Greek) and created everything. That one in his personal identity therefore preexisted in the beginning before the creation of the world and everything in it.

(4) There are correspondences between Jesus and Yahweh God of the Old Testament and Old Testament passages about Yahweh that are applied directly to Jesus.

(5) God the Father is identified as Yahweh as well as Christ Jesus being identified that way.

(6) God the Father, Jesus, God's Son, and the Holy Spirit each act as a self speaking to another as distinct from Himself. The selves have personal love for each other implying they are distinct from each other as persons.

(7) There is a declared distinction implied in the one called Word, that is distinct from God, who becomes flesh in Christ Jesus.

(8) The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost all have divine attributes.

(9) Yahweh God is invisible but Yahweh God is also visible.

Thus, Scripture reveals that there is one self-existent God

identified as Yahweh in which there are three distinct selves, selves that are distinguished by the titles Father, Son, also called the Word, and Holy Spirit. One of these three, the Word, became flesh in Jesus. The one called Father is identified as Yahweh, and Jesus who is called Son of God also is identified as Yahweh. Moreover Jesus made clear that Yahweh God is numerically one Yahweh.

We emphasize here that there are many other facts stated in Scripture relating to the divine being and Christ that do not relate to ontology, but these are not treated in this chapter. And other statements may turn out to be related by implication, but this must be derived by a careful deductive process.

Apart from a rational explanation concerning the facts, the truth is a mystery. But Christians are to be able to give a rational account for this truth. The task of this book is to give a rational explanation concerning the facts. When doing this we must follow the principles first that the plain sense is to be accepted unless there is a clear reason from the context or more basic doctrinal conclusions to interpret a passage or words metaphorically, and second that clear passages where there are no alternative interpretations are to be applied to passages where seeming alternative interpretations are possible.

****CHAPTER 3** BASIC ONTOLOGY OF CHRIST AND THE TRINITY**

Christians can see the truth from the facts of Scripture intuitively. This is because they have the unction of the Holy Spirit so that they have the truth. But when giving an account of the truth rationally and logically the proper method is to strictly distinguish the facts of Scripture from conclusions drawn from the facts in a careful systematic way. Thus, we have laid out the biblical facts in a previous chapter, Chapter 2, carefully attempting to avoid drawing conclusions as much as possible. Included was a section stating how various heretical views directly contradict the biblical facts. In particular they do this by denying the biblical fact that many citations in the New Testament identify Jesus to be Yahweh (LORD, Jehovah) by applying many passages of the Old Testament referring Yahweh (LORD, Jehovah) God directly to Jesus. Now here in this chapter we interpret the facts to show how logical deduction from the facts establishes basic Christian doctrine with regard to the ontology of Christ and the one true God.

The basic theology of Christ and God with regard their ontology is to be derived by deduction from the facts of scripture. It is an account of the existent being of Christ and God. By definition, giving such an account of existent being is labelled ontology (from ontos, being, and -ology, account or science). In this book we are concerned with the ontology of Christ and God.

We have seen various facts concerning the being of Christ and Yahweh God. Christ Jesus is declared to be a man and is declared by citations from the Old Testament to be also Yahweh, and therefore ontologically God. God the Father as well as Christ Jesus is declared to be Yahweh. Yahweh God is declared to be the only divine being and creator, and declared to be numerically one. These are stated in Scripture as ontological facts, referring to the divine being. It is also stated that God is invisible but Yahweh was seen. We will examine the ontological terms used for Christ and God in Scripture and find that terms are used in different senses. For clear description, terms need to be narrowed down to state the ontology precisely, otherwise we can fall into self-contradiction. A clear and precise terminology concerning ontology is required to give a clear and consistent account.

It must be faced that the questions asked about how Jesus can be both Yahweh and so be God and be man at the same time and how there can be three selves in God yet God is a single being are both questions of ontology. Theology must give an account that is logically consistent within itself for these facts of how there can be such a real existing being. But since it has reference to Christ and God it is a theological account.

The idea that such an account is merely metaphysical and philosophical speculation is really a surreptitious assault on the facts. The facts themselves refer to a real existing being, Yahweh God. They are inherently ontological facts. They are things that must be explained in no other way than by reference to what is meant by a real existing being. This is to be distinguished from philosophical speculation which starts with a human view of reality and things apart from God's revelation. The theology of ontology starts from the God-given revelation of the facts concerning God and Christ. It would be metaphysical and philosophical speculation if the facts were interpreted in terms of a human

view of reality and things apart from God's revelation.

The existence of Yahweh God and the three distinct selves, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for which theology is to give an account must be distinguished from their actions and activities that are not a matter of being but a matter of voluntary choice. It needs to be continually emphasized that these questions are not about what God voluntarily does according to his sovereign will. No questions about God's acts are directly a matter of ontology, but only result from God being consistent in what He wills and does with what God is in his inherent being. The acts of God themselves do not determine God's being. Confusion at this point is contrary to the revelation of God Himself, for God refers to Himself in terms of ontology. At the same time there is a vast amount about God that is revealed in his relationship with his created world and what He works out in his plan of redemption. In this book we are concerned to give an account of the ontology of Christ and God and sharply distinguish it from what God reveals about Himself in what He has done by his voluntary sovereign will.

***The Simple Explanation.**

The Bible states that Jesus is a man but that He is also the Yahweh God of the Old Testament. The simple explanation is that there was a human element added to what Jesus was when He was born compared to what He was as Yahweh God before He was born. This human element, called a human nature, has to be distinct from what Jesus already was as Yahweh God. Before He was born He existed as a distinct divine self along with the divine nature. So in his person on earth Jesus was Yahweh God but had the natures of both Yahweh God and man. Jesus is Yahweh God, as is also his Father, but both (along with the Spirit) are one God because they have a single divine nature in common.

***1* Terminology Required for the Ontology of Christ and God**

In Scripture words relating to ontology are used but often with other nonontological uses as well. These must be distinguished. In addition further precise distinctions must be made using carefully defined words. In doing this one must be careful not to read into biblical words improper ontological meanings so as to distort the biblical revelation. It must be recognized that there is a variety in biblical usage so that what may seem to be an ontological usage in Scripture is not actually what Scripture states about the ontology of God but is rather a nonontological usage. An example of a nonontological use occurs with the Greek word *prosopon*. It normally and literally means "face." It is also used in classical Greek to refer to the mask used by an actor in a play, and hence the role he takes. But it came to be used to refer to a person ontologically.

Historically, the first attempt at a consistent logical account concerning ontological relationships in God was given by Christians in the Greek language and summarized in Church councils. These were constructed to combat serious heretical positions that arose within the Church. The main general conclusions were correct, but there were problems with a number of the arguments and details that became enshrined in traditional theology.

We will start with basic ontological terms and then introduce additional terms carefully at each step in the development of a consistent view of the ontology of Christ and God. In the main, the basic definitions will be the same as the terms used in the history of the Christian church but hopefully explained in such a way as to demonstrate greater consistency with the biblical facts that we have given in Chapter 2.

*** Basic Ontological Terms**

(1) Entities

The word entity is often used to refer to a real existing thing, but it is also used now to refer to fictional and other things such as legal entities. The word entity is to be understood to refer more generally to whatever is not an inherent quality or characteristic of something else whether that thing is real or imaginary.

(2) Properties and Attributes

Next, we need to distinguish what is inherent to an entity itself but not part of the entity in descriptions of what is inherent to the entity.

First we will distinguish what are inherent to entities as properties. We will designate descriptions as attributes. Attributes are referred to as descriptive because in making a statement about an inherent quality the term for it is linguistically "attributed to" the entity, whereas the property is asserted to be what is inherent to the entity in itself. Of course the terms must be described to be understood, but what is referred to may actually have a different true explanation than what can be said specifically to describe a property or attribute. In the physical world this is clear. An attribute of an object such as redness that may be used as part of the description of the object is in reality due to something else than the appearance of redness, the atomic structure and arrangement of electrons, etc. What makes an object what it is is not the definitional description, though the definition may truly distinguish the object from other objects. The properties make it what it is while the attributes define how it may be described as distinct in what it is different from other classes of objects. The word attribute has often been used in the sense of the word property with resulting imprecision.

(3) Existence

The words exist and existence are not used to refer to a property of something, but to refer to the ontological reality of something that can occur by itself without any additional real thing to exist. This is different from a real entity that depends on something else to exist at all, and also it is in contrast to something that is entirely imaginary. We will discover that consistency requires some further clarification about existence as an aspect of being.

(4) Being and Ontology

To talk about being it is necessary to relate this to existence and reality. Being refers to what is inherent and relates to a real entity in contrast to an imaginary entity. It is fundamental that a specific being be distinguished from being in general. The true God is not being in general but a specific individual creator God, a specific being. Humans and angels in Scripture are sentient beings. God in Scripture is a sentient being. We use the word being by itself here in this book to refer to a real sentient entity. Ontologically, we have seen God in Scripture is self-existent, whereas humans and angels are not self-existent beings. We will generally use the term "divine being" to refer to God ontologically.

We have used the words ontology and ontological without precise definition. More precisely ontology refers to what is inherent and essential to something being a real sentient existent entity.

(5) Deity

We use the term deity to mean godhood, God in his being, as an ontological term. We are not using it to refer to a particular god. The term divinity is too misused in modern usage to be a satisfactory term. On the other hand we will

use the term divine being for the entire being of the one true God.

***2* Christ's Humanity - Consubstantial with Humanity**

We have seen that Jesus is stated to be a man and continually declared to be Christ who according to the basic meaning of the term refers to a human descendant of King David, and who as the future king will be anointed to rule over Israel and the world. But Jesus is also identified with Yahweh God of the Old Testament. How Scripture can do this seems to be a mystery. A first step toward a rational explanation is to properly define what is meant by being a man and what is meant by humanity.

Being a man and being human is a matter of definition. A man is a particular instance of what is defined to be human, which consists of the sum total of essential human attributes. So a man or human being is an instance of something that has the sum total of essential human attributes. Jesus is seen to be one who has the attributes of humanity, and therefore by definition is a true man.

But what about sin and corruption? We must distinguish what is essential to humanity ontologically in contrast to moral corruption and consequences both in terms of what is physical and in terms of experience. Man was created without sin and corruption. Adam was without sin and corruption until he fell into sin. So sin and corruption are not inherent to what it means to be human and these are not inherent essential attributes. The word substance is used to refer to the inherent essential attributes of what it means to be human which does not include human corruption.

Substance - ousia

Substance refers to what is real rather than imaginary. In Greek, the word that was used referring to substance is

ousia. The word was and is used in a general way to refer only to physical material substance. However it also became used of what is in things that really exist that are not physical materials. Even spirits that truly exist have what may be said to have spiritual substance.

Substance (ousia) came to be used commonly of the common essential characteristics of what makes up something that is in a class of things. Any person who has human substance or the sum of essential human attributes is by definition a man and vice versa. Jesus is stated to be a man, but also seen to have the essential human attributes that by definition of man mean that his substance is human.

But the collection of common essential characteristics is abstract because disassociated from individuals. Substance refers merely to the common abstract characteristics of humanity in general. It is this later usage that came to be used in theological statements, and this is the way the term will be used in this book.

The term essence is another term that relates to real entities. But the term essence is more general than substance and somewhat ambiguous. Essence is often used to refer to the sum of inherent properties in a real entity. At other times, however, essence refers to the sum of attributes of a real entity in the same way as the term substance. But substance usually refers to the latter and we will use substance specifically to refer to the sum of attributes of a being necessary to distinguish what that being is from all other classes of beings.

The term substance when referring to ontology must be distinguished from the general usage of the term in the Bible, the word ousia in Greek. In Scripture it simply refers to possessions:

Luke 15:12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father,

give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. 13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

This clearly is a usage that doesn't refer to the ontology of a being. But the meaning of terms always depends on the context in which they are used. The word substance (ousia) in the context of ontological discourse has the different meaning given above.

When it comes to Jesus being human the common term that is used of Him is that Jesus is consubstantial with us. The prefix con- indicates that Jesus has the same substance or defining attributes "with" (con-) us. In Greek the equivalent term is homoousios. The defining attributes are the same, "homo-", as ours.

In what way is Jesus consubstantial (homoousios) with humans? Jesus is consubstantial (homoousios) with humans in the sense that He has the same set of necessary and essential attributes that define someone as being in the class of human beings and accordingly consistent with the meaning of the term substantiality or "ousiosness." It is clear in Scripture that the man Christ Jesus, has such attributes. He therefore belongs as was said before in the class of human beings, and so is by definition a true man. The word consubstantial (homoousios) gives a precise ontological term.

In the early church the definition of substance was not entirely clear. It was often used to refer to what is inherent and necessary to an individual being. So then the question arises: Why can't substance (ousia) be considered to be what is essential in the sense of what is inherent and necessary to individual being? The answer is that what is inherent and necessary to a particular individual being applies only to an individual. So if substance has that sense and applies to the whole of humanity it would imply that

the whole of humanity must be considered to be a single individual being, which is impossible. To refer to humanity in general the term substance has to be used so that is not restricted to a single individual.

***3* Christ's Deity - The Essential Deity of Christ Jesus**

The same explanation of how Jesus is a man applies to Jesus on the other side, because of Him being identified as Yahweh. The declaration that Jesus is Yahweh has direct ontological implications because according to Scripture one who is Yahweh necessarily has the properties and attributes of the divine being, the one true God. Anything that has a name that can apply only to a class of things has to have the properties and attributes of that class. The true God is something in a class in which there is only one thing, the class in which there is the numerically one true God. But then this means that Jesus necessarily by definition of terms has the same substance as God the Father who is also Yahweh with the substance of the divine being. Both are Deity existing eternally.

Due to these identifications Jesus and God the Father are automatically and necessarily consubstantial or homoousios. We must not forget the fact documented in Chapter 2 (section 7) that God the Father and his Son have the same divine attributes, which again by definition also means having the same substance, according to common theological usage of the term. Both the Father and Jesus have the same divine attributes that are revealed as the characteristics of what are essential to God. These attributes belong to both. In short, the sum of attributes that God uses to describe the divine being exhibit his substance. And since the divine attributes are the same the substance is the same, and so Jesus and God the Father are consubstantial. No other argument or facts are needed to reach this conclusion.

This accounting is not at all the accounting given in the early church. In the 4th century and following centuries there was never ever any argument made that Christ Jesus is identified in the New Testament as Yahweh of the Old Testament to refute the heretical proposition that He was a creature created with supposed vast powers. It seems that the early church fathers relied exclusively on the Septuagint (LXX) Greek translation of the Old Testament in which the word kurios is used for both Yahweh and Adonai. Thus there was no way for them to know that New Testament citations of the Old Testament identified Jesus as one rather than the other. Lord (kurios) in the Old Testament apparently meant for them no more than God in a very exalted position. They were completely ignorant of Jesus being identified as Yahweh. In the Septuagint, the translation of Yahweh Elohim was kurios o theos, and Adonai Yahweh was despotes kurie.

There is no other explanation for this failure to appeal to the biblical facts than that they were totally ignorant of the Scripture clearly identifying Jesus with Yahweh. This failure continued throughout church history. One may search in vain in volume after volume in standard theologies for argumentation for the Deity of Christ Jesus from the direct citations of the Old Testament that Jesus is to be identified as Yahweh.

***4* Christ's Continuing Existence - The Incarnation**

The very fact that Jesus is identified as Yahweh indicates He preexisted. And also Scripture states that through Jesus all that was created was created through Him. This has been seen this in the preceeding chapter. So on the face of it Jesus in some way had to preexist. But there must be some distinction between preexisting and being man, since Jesus didn't preexist as man. On the other hand there had to be some continuity. There had to be within Christ Jesus in his preexistence and in his becoming a man some distinct

aspect that continued without change different from his humanity.

It is to be noticed that the new state of existence wasn't as a dual divine-human entity as a mere inhabitation of a man, since then as man he could not be identified as Yahweh as Scripture clearly identifies Him. He would instead be God with or within a mere man. And because his essential deity could not change in his new state of existence, the aspect that continued must be immutable.

In becoming a man Scripture uses the word flesh to state that God became a man in Christ. This is stated in John 1 and other passages:

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 ¶ And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh,

nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

15 ¶ John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

Here in John 1:15 it is stated that John, referring to John the Baptist, bore witness of "Him," which in the context that follows has to refer to Jesus. And "Him" here is the "Word made flesh," (v 14) which was with God but not the same as God (v 1), yet was God in some sense. But we know from Chapter 2 that Jesus was clearly stated to be Yahweh. So clearly Jesus in the beginning was the Word and Deity, being both the Word stated to be God and Yahweh. Again, thus far how that can be is a mystery.

Being made flesh refers to being made human.

Heb. 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

Here partaking "flesh and blood" refers to a living human being and here in the context it is Jesus. Flesh points to more than to mere literal flesh.

1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

In the preceeding passages flesh referred to the ontological reality of being human. Here God, that Scripture says

cannot be seen, is said to be manifested in "the flesh," which of course is visible. Again it refers to being seen to be a real human being. And again it is mystery how God can be both visible and invisible.

1John 4:2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

2John 1:7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

It is very clear that understanding about Jesus coming in the flesh is very important. But what does it mean? We have seen in the above passages that in those contexts it often refers to something ontological about Jesus.

There are other usages of the word flesh, but they do not refer to what is ontological. They rather relate to moral corruption, etc.

The common theological term for the Christ having come in the flesh is incarnation. The word incarnation is of late origin in the late Middle Ages. It is not necessary to go into detail about the history, except to state that it is from Latin *incarnatus*, indicating coming into a state of being in flesh. The word incarnation and flesh gives the impression of what was different rather than what has continued when Jesus entered the world as a human being. One thing that is to be noted is that incarnation indicates the process of Jesus as Yahweh becoming a man, rather than the fact that the man Jesus is identified as Yahweh. But both becoming man and continuing as Yahweh are equally significant.

***5* Distinct Natures: In Human Beings and Christ Jesus**

All of the above, that Jesus was Yahweh God before He was born and continued as Yahweh God when He became man, necessitates the introduction of what in theological language is called nature. It wasn't on the side of deity that Jesus as Yahweh came into the new state of existence and change occurred. Yahweh God does not change. In addition to abstract substance being applied to Jesus there also has to be something that specifically applies to Him as an individual. But what is it that was added? It is too vague to say it is a human substance in addition to the divine substance, a human side and divine side. That only puts it in terms of abstract description. It must be put in terms of actual properties and not abstract attributes. The term flesh is a biblical term that might be used but is not specific enough. What is needed is a term that applies to both the divine being as well as human beings. This is the term nature.

The word for nature in Greek is usually written physis. Christ Jesus had to have a specific human nature (physis) that is common with others in the class of human beings. This is not just general characteristics of humanity (ousia) but a specific instance of substance implied by ousia. But this is something in common with all men in the class of beings called human beings. Ousia (substance) is not something unique to an individual.

The word nature (physis) in theological discourse refers to what is ontological within an actual person but referring to what is in him that is common to all human beings as a class within their actual existences as individual human beings. Nature is not just descriptions or attribution of capabilities alone without being what is real (ontological). Remember we have distinguished attributes that are descriptive from properties that are real but often not easily

described. The sum of real properties, nevertheless, can be clearly referred to as a whole.

We know in an elementary way what is meant by the terms nature and also person. We know that a dog has a nature, an animal nature, the nature of a dog. But this differs from ordinary usage. A dog nature is what is actually in all dogs that make them different from other living things. It is not the individual dog itself but what is in a particular dog that is common with other dogs. So in human beings human nature is what is actually in each individual that is inherently and essentially common with all other human beings.

This usage of the term nature is different from the most common ordinary English usage and also from its broader use in Scripture. In common usage nature often is used to emphasize what is distinct about the a particular person as it intersects with the nature of other people.

In Scripture nature is also used in a number of different ways, for example the condition of a what a person becomes by habit, also his kind or origin, etc.

Rom. 1:26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature :

Rom. 2:14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

Rom. 2:27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?

Rom. 11:21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

Rom. 11:24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature , and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural

branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

1Cor. 11:14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?

Gal. 2:15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

Gal. 4:8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

Eph. 2:3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

James 3:7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind :

2Peter 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

For a precise discussion of the ontology of Christ, nature has to be carefully defined in a way that relates to ontology. Nature for this purpose consists of elements and capabilities of elements that work together as an integrated system in the individual. This usage of the term nature does not include individual capabilities that an individual has developed different from what is common to all but only inherent capabilities common to all individuals in a class of beings.

In this usage various capabilities of what is called the soul are elements of a nature as well as the physical body with its physical capabilities. It includes capabilities of the soul which interact with the body. And this includes such things such as thought and will.

Will has to be recognized as part of human nature because in Christ Jesus his will as a man is fundamentally different in capability from his will as Yahweh God. It therefore

belongs to both the divine side and the human side differently, as a divine capability and a human capability. Before being born Jesus had a will, which would be a divine will and not a human will. That there is a difference between Jesus' human will and the divine will in Him is also shown by Jesus in praying to God his Father:

Matthew 26:39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

This has to refer to his human will as distinct from his divine will, because being Yahweh God, Jesus has a will which would not be different from the will of God the Father which is a divine capability of will.

Jesus' human nature has to be distinct from what Jesus already had being Yahweh God and which continued when He became a man, which is inherently immutable because it relates to Yahweh God. But since He was immutable as Yahweh, Jesus had the divine nature that continued without change when He became a man. He had elements and capabilities of that divine nature that then continued to exist in Him along with the elements and capabilities of human nature that He obtained in the incarnation.

***6* Distinct Hypostases: In Human Beings and Christ Jesus**

In human beings there is a another element or aspect of existence that must be considered in addition to nature. This additional element is the distinct personal aspect. When we referred to the nature of a dog we did not think of a dog as a human person. We know that in referring to human beings John Smith has a human nature and also is a distinct person but that his nature is not the same thing as his person. The human nature in each individual human being is that aspect of them that is common to all human beings. But in each

one there is something unique to each of them that makes them particular existing personal entities. This is called their hypostasis. The word hypostasis was used in a new sense in the early church to bring this out.

Hypostasis relates to particular existence. The word in Latin reflects this. In English it is subsistence, which is the aspect of an entity without which the entity would not exist. Subsistence as a word is in common use. When we refer to subsistence living the idea is what is necessary for a person to remain alive. Even there it relates to what is necessary to life or existence. A hypostasis therefore is something things subsist in to exist. The nature of a particular entity exists in or because of its hypostasis.

In human beings the hypostasis may be described as a distinction between the "who" and the "what" of their ontology, in reality as well as thought or description. Christ Jesus and human beings are alike in this respect. In both there is a distinction between the "who" and the "what" of their ontology in reality as well as in thought or description. Though each human being has a hypostasis, the hypostasis is not part of their particular human nature in which all that is within is common to all human beings. If that were not so it would make the concept of hypostasis self-contradictory, by asserting that something unique within each is common to all. It would confuse the distinction between the "who" and the "what" of their ontology. Hypostasis by definition refers to the aspect of unique distinct personal existence in a being that must be distinct from their nature.

Whatever continued before Jesus became man was something ontological and distinct from his human nature. And if it was inherently necessary for Jesus to have something on the divine side ontologically unique and distinct from a human nature, it would have to be a hypostasis. And it would have to be a divine hypostasis. His hypostasis refers to the aspect of unique distinct personal

existence in his being. Jesus' human nature is the same then in character as the human nature of all other men, but his particular personal existence is not. He is distinct and in fact ontologically separate. His own particular nature is separate from others but the elements of that nature are the same as the nature He has in common with others. What is in common has to be distinguished from what is not, and that is his unique particular personal existence, his hypostasis. This explains why hypostasis can't consist of a particular instance of a human nature. If it did, Jesus' unique particular personal existence would only be human. He couldn't be Yahweh God. So in Christ there is what is indicated by his distinct personhood that continued from before his incarnation but distinct from the nature that has to be understood as added to Him for Him to be a real particular man.

But that also means that in every real particular man there has to be a real personal aspect of him that is distinct from the component that is common with all others. And that means that the hypostasis is not only a "who," something personal, but it has to be a particular component or aspect of their existence distinct from their human nature. Each particular human being has to have a hypostasis, without which he would not have particular personal existence.

Logical consistency requires that if Christ's hypostasis is distinct from his human nature, that it also be distinct from his divine nature, since according to the meaning of nature there is the distinction between hypostasis and nature. The divine hypostasis is not an instance of divine nature, but distinct from it, just as the hypostasis of Christ Jesus is distinct from the human nature, and not an instance of it. But in his preexisting state Christ Jesus had the divine nature which existed as an aspect of his being in addition to the hypostasis and personhood. Both continued immutably in the incarnation.

Hypostasis must also be related to true personhood and consciousness as a self. So it is not a mere distinction of being a particular individual that can be named and distinguished. And certainly it is not mere biological derivation such as of physical substance. This ties hypostasis to the distinct selves of God documented in Chapter 2. Ontologically distinct selves must relate to hypostases.

It is important that hypostasis does not include a nature. If in the incarnation Jesus' hypostasis took up into itself the added human nature because nature is part of a specific individual hypostasis, then the hypostasis before the incarnation and the hypostasis after the incarnation would be different, it would change. This is extremely important because one of the most serious errors in the early church was confusion in the relationship of hypostasis to nature in Christ.

One more matter already implied in the distinction between hypostasis and nature stems from the fact that what exists as unchanging in Christ Jesus is his hypostasis, a divine hypostasis of Yahweh God. Logical consistency of the ontology of Christ's deity is absolutely dependent on this. His existence cannot not lie in nature but hypostasis. The existence of nature lies in hypostasis, not hypostasis in nature. Consequently his existence as a distinct person does not lie in either the divine nature or the human nature, but in his divine hypostasis. This must be stressed as of utmost importance because it has very far reaching implications.

*** Ontology of Christ ***

Pulling it together we have what is known as Chalcedonian Christology. It comes by deduction from facts of Scripture in conjunction with necessary concepts to precisely state the ontology of Christ logically. In Christ Jesus his preexisting divine nature and his human nature come

together in one person and one hypostasis. This one person and hypostasis is identified as Yahweh God.

The basic reasoning with regard to the ontology of Christ Jesus is as follows: Starting with the fact of Jesus as a true man it is reasoned what this means in ontological terms, that it had to mean that He had all essential human attributes. The term for having the sum of essential attributes in a class of entities is its substance. So Jesus is consubstantial or homoousios with humanity. The fact that Jesus is identified also as Yahweh and has the attributes of God leads to the conclusion that He is inherently deity and consubstantial or homoousios with God the Father and the Holy Spirit that are also distinctly deity.

Jesus' consubstantiality with both God and man is not enough to rationally explain his ontology, however, because He is also stated to be God incarnate and not a mere man joined with God. Christ Jesus preexisted as shown by the fact that all that was created is repeatedly stated to have been through Him. It follows that there has to be some distinction between him preexisting and being a man because Jesus didn't preexist as a man. It is reasoned that on the Godward side there had to be some aspect of Him that continued without change, and on the manward side something that did not preexist. The latter consists of elements of a soul and a body called his human nature which is common to all human beings. In addition there has to exist something called the hypostasis that is unique to an individual human being but which is a distinct personal aspect and not common to each and makes him a particular existing entity. The distinct personal aspect of Jesus' being that preexisted must be his hypostasis because not his human nature. But logical consistency requires that if Christ's hypostasis is inherently and necessarily distinct from his human nature, that it is also distinct from his divine nature. The divine hypostasis is not an instance of divine nature, but distinct from it. In his preexisting state

Christ Jesus had the divine nature which existed as an aspect of his being and continued without change in the incarnation, but distinct from his hypostasis which preexisted.

The conclusion that is arrived at is that in the incarnation Jesus had the divine nature and a human nature that came together in one person and one hypostasis, the conclusion also arrived at in the early church at the council of Chalcedon. What was not clear at Chalcedon but should have been was that the natures came together in one single person and hypostasis indissolubly connected to the one hypostasis but apart from each other though connected through the hypostasis, each nature being in hypostatic union with the one hypostasis rather than each other.

***7* Divine Hypostases**

We learn from Christ Jesus in the incarnation that the hypostasis is distinct from the human nature. Hypostasis and nature are therefore distinct aspects of being. Now if hypostasis and nature are distinct aspects of being and this is true of the hypostasis and human nature of Jesus, logical consistency requires that it be true of divine hypostasis and the divine nature. Otherwise there is in effect equivocation. So hypostasis is distinct from the divine nature which also does not change. Based on the logical consistency of the hypostasis and the divine nature being distinct in Jesus, it follows that the hypostasis of the Father and the divine nature are also distinct. And the same must be true of the Holy Spirit. So Christology elucidates the ontology of the divine being. This is why with regard to ontology as well as in other ways Christ Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God. What is necessary to his ontology applies to the ontology of God.

***8* The Unity of Yahweh God**

What is true about the distinctness of the hypostasis and natures of Christ carries over to the entire divine being. But the existence of three self-existent hypostases in the divine being would seem to imply tritheism. This, however, does not follow. There is only one divine nature or single real instance of the divine substance shared by all three, which means there can be only one divine being. If there were three divine beings, tritheism, there would have to be a divine nature for each of the three divine persons and hypostases. This is how it can be known that the three in the God are not one in the sense of being a harmonious community of three Gods. A united harmonious community of three Gods would each have their own distinct individual natures, whereas the three hypostases in God share a single divine nature in a single being. And Jesus in the way He stated the biblical revelation concerning God, explained that the one true God of Israel, Yahweh is numerically one single being.

One nature "belonging to" each hypostasis, identified as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is not entirely precise but adequately indicates something that they have in common in some way but without indicating precisely how. What is expressed here is to more exactly deal with the relations of hypostases within the divine being. "Classical Trinitarians" speak of an "interpenetration" in "Perichoresis," in line with their notions of the divine "essence." But the concept of a shared divine nature immediately implies direct connection of various elements of the nature with each of the three hypostases of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The elements of mind, will, etc. are identical. So when one of them does something it is in the mind of the other two, etc. The connection is inherent. It isn't even a "union." There is no need for much of the vague thought that is involved in discussions of Perichoresis.

What remains to be explained is how one who has the name Yahweh is one divine being yet can be a distinct self. The answer is that the name Yahweh is not a specific designation of a hypostasis but the divine being. This relates to the significance of the divine name, Yahweh. We have seen that Scripture identifies Jesus with the divine name, that He is Yahweh God of the Old Testament, the name of the divine being. The name of something refers to a particular being. The name Yahweh is that of the complete divine being. Yet God explained the significance of his name as one who is self-existent when He said, I am that I am. Jesus is identified as the divine being and self-existent. Jesus in his divine hypostasis is referred to as the I AM, the self-existent Yahweh. It means a hypostasis being identified as Yahweh is an assertion concerning the hypostasis as being personally and particularly existent as the complete divine being.

We can also go back also to the fundamental distinction between hypostasis and substance (ousia), that hypostasis refers to what is particular and definite whereas substance (ousia) refers to the common and general. The particular and definite relates to what identifies particular existence. And since particular and definite existence lies in the hypostasis, a distinct divine self lies in hypostasis.

But Jesus is only one hypostasis of the Trinity and not all three. Yet by being identified with the divine name, Jesus is being referred to as the complete divine being. That is simply true for the other hypostases, Father and Spirit in the Trinity as well. The hypostasis, though distinct from nature, is identified as the complete divine being when the divine nature exists along with it. And this is true for all three in the Trinity. But the fact of there being only one single divine nature for the three requires a conclusion that there can be only one divine being.

As a footnote, it may be objected that the name Yahweh

refers to God as an active subject, rather than what is ontological. That would satisfy a hypostasis being Yahweh referring to what is within the divine being that acts as the one supreme God, like El Shaddai. The issue here goes back to the significance of "name," whether it also refers to a title for a position, indicating "authority" or it identifies a being ontologically. The "I AM" shows that the significance of the name is self-existence, which is something ontological. It is a proper name and not a title for an acting subject. And to say it is a title is a denial that the one true divine being has a proper name. Therefore, the suggestion does not give a valid explanation.

***9* Conclusion**

In this chapter there has been a construction of the basic ontology of Christ and a Trinity of three of hypostases in one single divine being. This has been accomplished using carefully defined terms and deduced in a step-wise manner in conjunction with the biblical facts of the preceeding chapter. The result turns out to be the same as the early church councils in the most important conclusions. In Christ Jesus there are both the divine nature and a human nature that come together in one person and one hypostasis, and there are three distinct hypostases identified as God the Father, Jesus the Son of God and the Holy Spirit of God as one divine being.

****CHAPTER 4** BASIC ONTOLOGY OF GOD AND CHRIST IN HISTORY**

What we want to show is that in its main conclusions the early church came to the same basic conclusions as deduced from the facts of Chapter 2 in Chapter 3.

The main concern of the early church was the deity of Christ along with and being equal in deity to God the Father and the Holy Spirit, all three in one single divine being. And the continual underlying reason that was stated over and over was that without this truth there would be no redemption and salvation. In all the main decisions of the councils, even when in subsidiary points mistakes were made, the concern was the same. And in these main conclusions the church was correct. Throughout all the controversies to defend against heresy the concern for redemption and salvation was always present. But there was a prolonged struggle because the opponents of the truth were so adept at twisting Scripture in their favor.

In the early church the existence of a personal hypostasis was accepted making a distinction between hypostasis and substance. At first, even hypostasis and substance were not distinguished.

Then hypostasis and substance were distinguished but there was a certain amount of confusion. It only gradually became clear as Christology became more precise with passing time. But even when introduced as a distinct term it was clear that hypostasis is what makes a person particular and distinct from what is common and general. Hypostasis

is that which refers to what is particular and distinct in a real personal being in contrast to what is general and common to all members of a class, such as a nature when used as an ontological term.

There has always been a certain amount of confusion about the meaning of the term hypostasis, so it useful to establish the sense in which it was used historically and accepted in the church. We believe that we are using it in its correct and accepted sense.

In the early church attacks were made in various ways on the true ontology of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the first major council there was Arianism on one side, in which it was stated that Christ Jesus was a created being with such great powers that God could be said to have created everything through the powers in that created being. On the other side there was Modalism, often called Sabellianism, in which Christ Jesus was just one of the ways in which God the Father presented Himself in the role of being a man.

The basic problem to be solved with regard to the ontology of God and Christ is how to give a coherent logical account of the biblical fact that there is only one divine being but that more than one person is identified as Yahweh, identified by the divine name of the one divine being. There are three to be identified as Yahweh in one divine being.

Here is where the term hypostasis came to be used in a new sense from its previous usage. This usage of the term hypostasis is one key to a true understanding the Trinity and Christology. Basically it means that a hypostasis of God is distinguished from ousia, substance or essence but also from a specific individual nature.

Hypostases

The early church had already dealt with a number of heretical views when the view of Arius arose and was opposed at the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325. What was different was the extent of disagreement and opposition to Nicea within the church. There was concern among many that Nicea did not make clear that Modalism which was equally wrong was being tacitly allowed. Resolution came about through making a distinction between hypostases and substance or essence.

Resolution over the Arian conflict but avoiding Modalism came about in the following historical steps.

(1) First, the Cappadocian fathers explained the difference between the three within the Trinity and the one divine being in terms of what indicates the particular identity of an entity different from the essential general characteristics of the entity which is common to all the entities of a class of entities. This is shown by the following citations:

Basil (the Great) of Caesarea in Cappadocia, Asia Minor, wrote to his brother Gregory concerning the difference between ousia (substance or essence) and hypostasis (subsistence or "person"):

This then is the hypostasis, or "under-standing" [hupo - "under" + stasis - "standing"]; not the indefinite conception of the essence or substance, which, because what is signified is general, finds no "standing," but the conception which by means of the expressed peculiarities gives "standing" and circumscription to the general and uncircumscribed. (Letter 18.3)

The "standing" expressed here is real identifying existence of the entity which is seen as a particular (and hence a circumscribable) real entity.

Basil also wrote in a similar way to Count Terintius:

If you ask me to state briefly my own view, I shall state that essence has the same relation to hypostasis as the common has to the particular. (Letter 214).

Also Basil the Great wrote:

The distinction between “ousia” and “hypostasis” is the same as that between the general and the particular; as, for instance, between the animal and the particular man. Wherefore, in the case of the Godhead, we confess one essence or substance so as not to give a variant definition of existence, but we confess a particular hypostasis, in order that our conception of Father, Son and Holy Spirit may be without confusion and clear. (Letter 236. 6)

Gregory (the Theologian) of Nazianzus wrote

But worship the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, one Godhead [one Deity]; God the Father, God the Son and (do not be angry) God the Holy Spirit, one nature in three personalities, intellectual, perfect, self-existent, numerically separate, but not separate in Godhead (Orations 33).

Notice that Gregory states the oneness in terms of one single nature, rather than only substance. So he is stating the ontology of one nature in the three of the divine being, the nature having its existence in what became referred to as hypostases, the hypostases being self-existent Persons. And Gregory identifies the hypostases as referring to what is self-existent, rather than the nature being self-existent.

Gregory of Nyssa gives support to the definition of the word hypostasis introduced by Basil. He wrote in Book I

[T]he Church teaches that we must not divide our faith amongst a plurality of beings, but must recognize no difference of being in three Subjects or Persons, whereas our opponents posit a variety and unlikeness amongst them as Beings,

And he wrote in Book II Against Eunomius:

For which reason we say that to the holy disciples the mystery of godliness was committed in a form expressing at once union and distinction,--that we should believe on the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. For the differentiation of the subsistences [hupostaseon] makes the distinction of Persons [prosopon] clear and free from confusion, while the one Name standing in the forefront of the declaration of the Faith clearly expounds to us the unity of essence of the Persons [prosopon] Whom the Faith declares,--I mean, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. For by these appellations we are taught not a difference of nature, but only the special attributes that mark the subsistences [hupostaseon], so that we know that neither is the Father the Son, nor the Son the Father, nor the Holy Spirit either the Father or the Son, and recognize each by the distinctive mark of His Personal Subsistence [hupostaseon], in illimitable perfection, at once contemplated by Himself and not divided from that with Which He is connected.

The Cappadocian fathers indicate the same as was given in Chapter 3, that by hypostasis is meant what is particular in a being and not what is general and common with others in a class.

(2) Then Hilary of Poitiers (in De Synodis) wrote, explaining what took place in the East:

Many of us, beloved brethren, declare the substance of the Father and the Son to be one in such a spirit that I consider the statement to be quite as much wrong as right. The expression contains both a conscientious conviction and the opportunity for delusion. If we assert the one substance, understanding it to mean the likeness of natural qualities and such a likeness as includes not only the species but the genus, we assert it in a truly religious spirit, provided we believe that the one substance signifies such a similitude of qualities that the unity is not the unity of a monad but of equals. By equality I mean exact similarity so that the likeness may be called an equality, provided that the equality imply unity because it implies an equal pair, and that the unity which implies an equal pair be not wrested to mean a single Person. Therefore the one substance will be asserted piously if it does not abolish the subsistent personality or divide the one substance into two, for their substance by the true character of the Son's birth and by their natural likeness is so free from difference that it is called one. But if we attribute one substance to the Father and the Son to teach that there is a solitary personal existence although denoted by two titles: then though we confess the Son with our lips we do not keep Him in our hearts, since in confessing one substance we then really say that the Father and the Son constitute one undifferentiated Person. Nay, there immediately arises an opportunity for the erroneous belief that the Father is divided, and that He cut off a portion of Himself to be His Son. That is what the heretics mean when they say the substance is one: and the terminology of our good confession so gratifies them that it aids heresy when the word *homousios* is left by itself, undefined and ambiguous (De Synods. 67).

Hilary points out that there is acknowledgement of the confusion of terms.

(3). Third, Athanasius realized from Hilary's treatise that

Christians in the East intended the same truth as he did but used different language and words, and that he agreed that the alternate wording was acceptable.

In the West the word hypostasis was used approximately in the same sense as substantia, but in the East the word came to be used approximately in the sense of prosopon (Lat. persona). Athanasius had used it himself in both senses. In fact at Nicea hypostasis had been used in the sense of substance, which was anathematized, and was the sense favored by Athanasius.

The Council of Alexandria of A.D. 362 was held immediately after Athanasius came back for the final time out of exile, after Athanasius came to see what the fellow Christian fathers of the East were saying was what he maintained but in different words. From the council, a synodical letter (below) was written to Antioch in the East, explaining how they were in essential agreement.

(4) A Tome or Synodal Letter was sent from Alexandria and Athanasius to the People of Antioch:

5. For as to those whom some were blaming for speaking of three Subsistences [3683] [hypostases], on the ground that the phrase is unscriptural and therefore suspicious, we thought it right indeed to require nothing beyond the confession of Nicæa, but on account of the contention we made enquiry of them, whether they meant, like the Arian madmen, subsistences foreign and strange, and alien in essence [ousia] from one another, and that each Subsistence was divided apart by itself, as is the case with creatures in general and in particular with those begotten of men, or like different substances, such as gold, silver, or brass;--or whether, like other heretics, they meant three Beginnings and three Gods, by speaking of three Subsistences.

They assured us in reply that they neither meant this nor had ever held it. But upon our asking them "what then do you mean by it, or why do you use such expressions?" they replied, Because they believed in a Holy Trinity, not a trinity in name only, but existing and subsisting in truth, "both a Father truly existing and subsisting, and a Son truly substantial and subsisting, and a Holy Spirit subsisting and really existing do we acknowledge," and that neither had they said there were three Gods or three beginnings, nor would they at all tolerate such as said or held so, but that they acknowledged a Holy Trinity but One Godhead, and one Beginning, and that the Son is coessential with the Father, as the fathers said; while the Holy Spirit is not a creature, nor external, but proper to and inseparable from the Essence of the Father and the Son.

6. Having accepted then these men's interpretation and defence of their language, we made enquiry of those blamed by them for speaking of One Subsistence, whether they use the expression in the sense of Sabellius, to the negation of the Son and the Holy Spirit, or as though the Son were non-substantial, or the Holy Spirit impersonal [3684]. But they in their turn assured us that they neither meant this nor had ever held it, but "we use the word Subsistence thinking it the same thing to say Subsistence or Essence;" "But we hold that there is One, because the Son is of the Essence of the Father, and because of the identity of nature. For we believe that there is one Godhead, and that it has one nature, and not that there is one nature of the Father, from which that of the Son and of the Holy Spirit are distinct."

[We may note that the word nature (physis) is used here in addition to the word essence (ousia), and the two are clearly identified as having similar meanings referring to what is quite distinct from the Persons of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (later referred to as hypostases). And here the nature (physis) of God is one single thing, and

not that there are distinct natures of Father, Son, and Spirit.]

Well, thereupon they who had been blamed for saying there were three Subsistences agreed with the others, while those who had spoken of One Essence, also confessed the doctrine of the former as interpreted by them. And by both sides Arius was anathematised as an adversary of Christ, and Sabellius, and Paul of Samosata, as impious men, and Valentinus and Basilides as aliens from the truth, and Manichæus as an inventor of mischief.

(5) The Council of Constantinople of AD 381 explained to the church in the West the results of the council in a synodical letter in AD 382. It used the terminology in the sense used in the East that Athanasius had accepted as having acceptable meanings. It was the usage of the Cappadocians. The Cappadocians had emphasized that they were applying the common usage of the day in their analysis, so they were not taking their concepts from philosophy and philosophical notions and so should not as such be read into what they said or what the councils accepted. This is what the meaning of *ousia* meant that was accepted at the First Council of Constantinople in AD 381. The words of the Council were to be understood in the sense accepted in the East but in agreement in their meaning with what the West said in different words.

The Synodical Letter of the Council of Constantinople,
A.D. 382.

The Synodical Letter of the Council of Constantinople specifically uses the terms distinguishing three hypostases or persons from one substance, nature and Godhead (Deity). Also it refers to the incarnation not being without a soul. Being addressed to Latin speakers, it was in Latin with Latin terms, except for a transliteration of the word *hypostasis*:

This is the faith which ought to be sufficient for you, for us, for all who wrest not the word of the true faith; for it is the ancient faith; it is the faith of our baptism; it is the faith that teaches us to believe in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. According to this faith there is one Godhead, Power and Substance of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; the dignity being equal, and the majesty being equal in three perfect hypostases, i.e. three perfect persons. Thus there is no room for the heresy of Sabellius by the confusion of the hypostases, i.e. the destruction of the personalities; thus the blasphemy of the Eunomians, of the Arians, and of the Pneumatomachi is nullified, which divides the substance, the nature, and the godhead, and superinduces on the uncreated consubstantial and co-eternal Trinity a nature posterior, created and of a different substance. We moreover preserve unperturbed the doctrine of the incarnation of the Lord, holding the tradition that the dispensation of the flesh is neither soulless nor mindless nor imperfect; and knowing full well that God's Word was perfect before the ages, and became perfect man in the last days for our salvation.

Let this suffice for a summary of the doctrine which is fearlessly and frankly preached by us, and concerning which you will be able to be still further satisfied if you will deign to read the tome of the synod of Antioch, and also that tome issued last year by the Ecumenical Council held at Constantinople, in which we have set forth our confession of the faith at greater length, and have appended an anathema against the heresies which innovators have recently inscribed. (Synodical Letter of 382)

Though the Greek word hypostasis and the Latin word subsistence do not appear in the creed of the Council of Constantinople the distinction was clearly made by the

statement made in this Synodical Letter of 382, otherwise this understanding would not be known to be generally accepted. And by acceptance in the West the distinction would be made there also. In addition the word substance and nature are used together with godhead, in contrast to hypostases and persons.

The Synodical letter also condemned Sabellianism and Apollinarianism along with other errors. They were condemned by name in Canons of the Council. Sabellianism is identified in the substance of its error as "the confusion of the hypostases, i.e. the destruction of the personalities." The substance of the error of Apollinarianism that Jesus did not have a human soul is rejected in the words "We moreover preserve unperverted the doctrine of the incarnation of the Lord, holding the tradition that the dispensation of the flesh is neither soulless nor mindless nor imperfect."

Natures

The Council of Constantinople in 381, though it declared hypostasis distinct from substance, did not settle the danger of heresy within the early church because the exact relationship between hypostasis and nature was unclear.

Because personhood seemed to be involved in a hypostasis it seemed that for Jesus to have a true human will he would have to have a distinct human hypostasis as well as a divine hypostasis. Yet the human and the divine within Jesus would have to be united. This was expressed by Nestorius, the Bishop of Constantinople, who was supported by the Emperor, but opposed strongly by Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria who gained the support of Celestine, the Bishop of Rome. Celestine called for the condemnation of the views of Nestorius as presented to him by Cyril. This led to the Council of Ephesus that condemned Nestorius and the

view of "Nestorianism" that there were two hypostases in Christ, undercutting the truth of the incarnation, that it is God who became flesh in the sense of a hypostasis of God taking on human nature, rather than a union of a hypostasis of God with the hypostasis of a human at the birth of Jesus.

Nestorius charged that Cyril was supporting the error of Apollinarianism, that Jesus did not have a human soul but only human flesh. And indeed Cyril essentially ignored this charge. In fact he emphasized that Jesus had only one nature in the incarnation. However Cyril did clearly state that Jesus had a human soul in at least two places in what he wrote.

Resolution of the conflict over the relation of the human nature of Jesus to his hypostasis came about in the following way:

(1) The Conflict between Cyril of Alexandria and Nestorius of Constantinople

The Emperor appointed Nestorius in AD 427-428 to be the bishop of the imperial see in Constantinople.

Several bishops accused Nestorius for opposing the title of Theotokos ("mother of God") for Mary.

Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, wrote to Celestine of Rome in 430 to condemn the teaching of Nestorius, which Celestine did in the form presented to him, demanding that Nestorius renounce his teaching under penalty of excommunication from the catholic church of which Celestine declared himself the head.

(2) Cyril's Letter to Nestorius

Cyril immediately wrote to Nestorius charging that

Nestorius had departed from the Nicene Creed.

The Epistle of Cyril to Nestorius:

But I return to the point which especially I had in mind. . The holy and great Synod therefore says, that the only begotten Son . . . came down, and was incarnate, and was made man, suffered, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven. These words and these decrees we ought to follow, considering what is meant by the Word of God being incarnate and made man. We do not say that the Logos' nature changes and becomes flesh. Nor do we say that it settled in a whole man who consists of body and soul. We say that the Logos, /hypostatically/ joining itself to a body, animated by a rational soul, became a man ineffably and in a way beyond our understanding. He was made the Son of Man not through will and favour alone, and not by accepting the person — or "role" — alone. We do not suppose that differences between the natures were destroyed in this unification but that in this ineffable and inexplicable unification Divinity and humanity remained perfect', that is, complete, appearing to us as the Single Lord Jesus Christ and Son. . . . For it would be foolhardy and frivolous to say that he who before all the ages always abided with the Father still needed to be born in order to begin his existence. Since he was born of woman for our sake and for the sake of our salvation, joining human nature to himself hypostatically, we therefore say that he was born as flesh. It is not that first he was born a simple man of the Holy Virgin and then the Logos descended upon him but that by uniting with flesh in the very womb, he was born as flesh, having assumed the flesh with which he was born. That is how we profess him in suffering and in resurrection. We do not say that the Logos of God by his very nature subjected himself to blows and wounds and other injuries because Divine nature, being non-corporal, is

not capable of suffering - we say that since his body was subjected to all these afflictions and that this body belongs to him, the Logos suffered for us because the Impassive was in a suffering body.

Cyril makes clear that the one who became incarnate was God, not that God was united to a separate person who was a man. He emphasized this over and over. Nestorius counter-charged that Cyril was advocating the error Apollinarius and virtually ignored the charges of Cyril against him. But Cyril in his very letter and in his commentaries clearly rejected Apollinarinism. Cyril then wrote again appending 12 anathemas against what he believed was Nestorius' position.

From the Epistle of Cyril to Nestorius sent with XII. Anathemas:

But it would not be sufficient for your reverence to confess with us only the symbol of the faith set out some time ago by the Holy Ghost at the great and holy synod convened in Nice: for you have not held and interpreted it rightly, but rather perversely; even though you confess with your voice the form of words.

. . . One therefore is Christ both Son and Lord, not as if a man had attained only such a conjunction with God as consists in a unity [242] of dignity alone or of authority. For it is not equality of honour which unites natures; for then Peter and John, who were of equal honour with each other, being both Apostles and holy disciples [would have been one, and], yet the two are not one. . . . [W]e do not divide between two hypostases or persons. . . . Wherefore when thinking rightly, we transfer the human and the divine to the same person (par' henos eiresthai).

. . . Again no less than before we recognize that he is the Word of God from his identity and likeness to the Father

. . . And since the holy Virgin brought forth corporally God made one with flesh according to nature, for this reason we also call her Mother of God, not as if the nature of the Word had the beginning of its existence from the flesh.

For "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God, and the Word was with God," and he is the Maker of the ages, coeternal with the Father, and Creator of all;

(2) The Council of Ephesus

The letters of both Cyril and Nestorius were read to the third ecumenical council held at Ephesus, and also that of Celestine.

Nestorius and his teaching were condemned.

(3) Agreement between Cyril of Alexandria and John of Antioch after the Council of Ephesus.

In this Cyril dropped his own emphasis on the union of the divine and the human nature in Christ which allowed for the definition at the Council of Chalcedon. A man named Paul brought a statement of faith of John of Antioch to Cyril. Cyril accepts this as an acceptable statement of faith.

The Letter of Cyril to John of Antioch:

Cyril to my lord, beloved brother, and fellow minister John, greeting in the Lord.

For when my lord, my most-beloved-of-God, fellow-minister and brother Paul, had arrived in Alexandria, we were filled with gladness, and most naturally at the coming of such a man as a mediator, who was ready to work beyond measure that he might overcome the envy of the devil and heal our divisions, and who by removing the offences scattered between us, would crown your

Church and ours with harmony and peace.

[W]e now have been fully satisfied by the document brought by my lord, the most pious bishop Paul, which contains an unimpeachable confession of faith, and this he asserted to have been prepared, by your holiness and by the God-beloved Bishops there. The document is as follows, and is set down verbatim in this our epistle.

We confess, therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, perfect God, and perfect Man of a reasonable soul and flesh consisting; begotten before the ages of the Father according to his Divinity, and in the last days, for us and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin according to his humanity, of the same substance with his Father according to his Divinity, and of the same substance with us according to his humanity; for there became a union of two natures.

Wherefore we confess one Christ, one Son, one Lord. According to this understanding of this unmixed union, we confess the holy Virgin to be Mother of God; because God the Word was incarnate and became Man, and from this conception he united the temple taken from her with himself.

[Among other things Cyril adds the following:]

He is also called the Man from heaven, being perfect in his Divinity and perfect in his Humanity, and considered as in one Person. For one is the Lord Jesus Christ, although the difference of his natures is not unknown, from which we say the ineffable union was made.

Will your holiness vouchsafe to silence those who say that a crisis, or mingling or mixture took place between the Word of God and flesh. For it is likely that certain also gossip about me as having thought or said such things.

But I am far from any such thought as that, and I also consider them wholly to rave who think a shadow of

change could occur concerning the Nature of the Word of God. For he remains that which he always was, and has not been changed, nor can he ever be changed, nor is he capable of change.

(4) Condemnation of Eutyches who was supported by Dioscorus, the successor to Cyril.

Alexandrians, led by their bishop Dioscorus, who succeeded Cyril in 444, interpreting words from Cyril who was often inconsistent in his language, affirmed that the two natures of Christ merged to become one nature in the incarnation. This was picked up by a monk of Constantinople named Eutyches who complained to Pope Leo that Nestorianism had been revived with the assertion of two natures in Christ. The continuing council at Constantinople condemned Eutyches' doctrine and repeated what had been accepted at the Council of Ephesus that there were two natures in the incarnate Word. Flavian, the bishop of Constantinople, read a statement of faith containing the following words:

"We confess that Christ is of two natures [ek duo phuseon] after the incarnation, confessing one Christ, one Son, one Lord, in one hypostasis and one prosopon."

A council called the Robber Council was presided over by Dioscorus in 449 under the authority of the Emperor, Theodocius, that rehabilitated Eutyches. Eutyches continued with his teaching which prompted a letter to Flavian from Rome that came to be known as Leo's Tome in which the one nature doctrine was condemned.

(5) The Tome of Leo

Positive statements from Leo's Tome affirm two natures, a divine nature and a human nature, in one person and hypostasis:

Leo [the bishop] to his [most] dear brother Flavian. . . .

[W]e could not have overcome the author of sin and of death, unless he who could neither be contaminated by sin, nor detained by death, had taken upon himself our nature, and made it his own. . . . For it was the Holy Ghost who gave fecundity to the Virgin, but it was from a body that a real body was derived; and "when Wisdom was building herself a house," the "Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, that is, in that flesh which he assumed from a human being, and which he animated with the spirit of rational life. Accordingly while the distinctness of both natures and substances was preserved, and both met in one Person, lowliness was assumed by majesty, weakness by power, mortality by eternity; and, in order to pay the debt of our condition, the inviolable nature was united to the passible, so that as the appropriate remedy for our ills, one and the same "Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus," might from one element be capable of dying and also from the other be incapable. Therefore in the entire and perfect nature of very man was born very God, whole in what was his, whole in what was ours. By "ours" we mean what the Creator formed in us at the beginning and what he assumed in order to restore; for of that which the deceiver brought in, and man, thus deceived, admitted, there was not a trace in the Saviour; and the fact that he took on himself a share in our infirmities did not make him a partaker in our transgressions.

Accordingly, the Son of God, descending from his seat in heaven, and not departing from the glory of the Father, enters this lower world, born after a new order, by a new mode of birth. After a new order; because he who in his own sphere is invisible, became visible in ours; He who could not be enclosed in space, willed to be enclosed; continuing to be before times, he began to exist in time; the Lord of the universe allowed his infinite majesty to be overshadowed, and took upon him

the form of a servant; the impassible God did not disdain to be passible Man and the immortal One to be subjected to the laws of death. And born by a new mode of birth; because inviolate virginity, while ignorant of concupiscence, supplied the matter of his flesh. What was assumed from the Lord's mother was nature, not fault; nor does the wondrousness of the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, as born of a Virgin's womb, imply that his nature is unlike ours. For the selfsame who is very God, is also very man; and there is no illusion in this union, while the lowliness of man and the loftiness of Godhead meet together. For as "God" is not changed by the compassion [exhibited], so "Man" is not consumed by the dignity [bestowed]. For although in the Lord Jesus Christ there is one Person of God and man, yet that whereby contumely attaches to both is one thing, and that whereby glory attaches to both is another; for from what belongs to us he has that manhood which is inferior to the Father; while from the Father he has equal Godhead with the Father. . . . [W]e read, on the one hand, that "the Son of Man came down from heaven," inasmuch as the Son of God took flesh from that Virgin of whom he was born; and on the other hand, the Son of God is said to have been crucified and buried, inasmuch as he underwent this, not in his actual Godhead; wherein the Only-begotten is coeternal and consubstantial with the Father, but in the weakness of human nature.

(6) The Council of Chalcedon

The majority of bishops present objected to the formulation of a new creed; they considered it sufficient to uphold the Nicene Creed and recognize the binding force of Cyril's *Dogmatic Letters* and Leo's Tome. But there had to be something which everyone could be required to sign, a "definition" of Faith:

In agreement, therefore, with the holy fathers, we all

unanimously teach that we should confess that our Lord Jesus Christ is one and the same Son, the same perfect in Godhead and the same perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man, the same of a rational soul and body, consubstantial [homoousion] with the Father in Godhead, and the same consubstantial [homoousion] with us in manhood, like us in all things except sin; begotten from the Father before the ages according to Godhead, and in the last days, the same, because of us and because of our salvation begotten from the Virgin Mary, Theotokos, according to manhood;

The one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only-begotten, known in two natures, unmixed, immutable, indivisible, inseparable, the distinction of the natures being by no means removed because of the union, but the property of each nature being preserved and coming together into [eis] one person [prosopon] and one subsistence [hupostasis], not parted or divided into two persons [prosopa], but one and the same Son and only-begotten, divine Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets of old concerning Him and Jesus Christ Himself have taught us and the creed of our fathers has handed down.

Note the word one appearing twice. Both prosopon and hypostasis are one showing that prosopon and hypostasis are not synonyms.

(7) Later Councils of Constantinople

Second Council of Constantinople (AD 553).

The purpose of the council was to try to get opponents of Chalcedon to accept it. It reiterated the conclusions of earlier councils and rejected the writings that led to Nestorianism. The main conclusion was to emphasize and clarify that nature is instantiated as a real entity in the hypostasis so that the human nature came to be in Christ Jesus by addition to his already existing hypostasis and

divine nature He had prior to the incarnation. The term used by writers of the time to express the specific existence of the human nature is enhypostasis, that the nature only exists concretely in union with the divine hypostasis of Jesus, otherwise it is anhypostatic. This actually expresses that primary existence lies in hypostasis rather than nature.

The Monophysites held that Chalcedon did not definitely and clearly exclude the heresy of Nestorianism. Chalcedon said that two natures come together in one hypostasis, but the word one was the Greek *mia* rather than the Greek *hen*, and *mia* could be a compound oneness. That sounded to them like it could mean two hypostases being united in one. The Council reiterated the main points of the previous councils in its condemnations and then condemned the writings of previous church fathers of Antioch whose teachings led to outright Nestorianism. Many of the Monophysites of the East accepted the explanations and became Chalcedonian, but most of the churches in Egypt, Syria, and elsewhere outside the Empire were not reconciled.

The following show that this Council accepted the main results of the previous councils that have been documented in the sections above:

1. Nicea and Constantinople I.

The council affirmed the consubstantiality of Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

"If anyone shall not confess that the nature or essence of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is one, . . . a consubstantial Trinity, one Godhead to be worshipped in three subsistences [hypostaseis] or Persons: let him be anathema." (Cap. 1)

2. Ephesus.

The council identified one who died on the Cross as one of the Trinity and not a man in whom God dwelt:

"If anyone does not confess that our Lord Jesus Christ who was crucified in the flesh is true God and the Lord of Glory and one of the Holy Trinity: let him be anathema." (Cap. 2)

"If anyone shall not call in a true acceptance, but only in a false acceptance, the holy, glorious, and ever-virgin Mary, the Mother of God, or shall call her so only in a relative sense, believing that she bare only a simple man and that God the word was not incarnate of her, but that the incarnation of God the Word resulted only from the fact that he united himself to that man who was born [of her]; . . . and if anyone shall not confess that in this sense the holy Synod of Chalcedon acknowledged her to be the Mother of God: let him be anathema." (Cap. 6)

3. Chalcedon.

"[I]f anyone shall not acknowledge as the Holy Fathers teach, that the union of God the Word is made with the flesh animated by a reasonable and living soul, and that such union is made synthetically and hypostatically, and that therefore there is only one Person, to wit: our Lord Jesus Christ, one of the Holy Trinity: let him be anathema." (Cap. 4)

"The fathers affirm that both natures are preserved whole and entire, without confusion or mingling. The union is therefore said to be a union of synthesis [addition without loss of elements], or a union of subsistence [hypostasis], signifying that there is no division, but a single real entity." (Cap. 4)

The council is insistant on the wording to make clear that

the Word (Logos) remains the divine hypostasis in the incarnation.

"If anyone using the expression, 'in two natures', does not confess that our one Lord Jesus Christ has been revealed in the divinity and in the humanity, so as to designate by that expression a difference of the natures of which an ineffable union is unconfusedly made, [a union] in which neither the nature of the Word was changed into that of the flesh, nor that of the flesh into that of the Word, for each remained that it was by nature, the union being hypostatic; but shall take the expression with regard to the mystery of Christ in a sense so as to divide the parties, or recognising the two natures in the only Lord Jesus, God the Word made man, does not content himself with taking in a theoretical manner the difference of the natures which compose him, which difference is not destroyed by the union between them, for one is composed of the two and the two are in one, but shall make use of number [two] to divide the natures or to make of them Persons properly so called: let him be anathema." (Cap. 7)

"If anyone uses the expression 'of two natures', confessing that a union was made of the Godhead and of the humanity, or the expression 'the one nature made flesh of God the Word', . . . but from these expressions shall try) to introduce one nature or substance [made by a mixture] of the Godhead and manhood of Christ; let him be anathema." (Cap. 8)

Third Council of Constantinople (AD 681)

Our understanding is that the main conclusion was that the functioning of capabilities in Christ Jesus takes place either in the divine or the human nature and not in his Person (hypostasis). In particular the will is something that resides in a nature, so that because in Jesus there is the divine

nature as well as a human nature, there are two wills in Him, both a divine will and a human will. This explains how Jesus can have a will, a human will, that He submits to the divine will of God the Father, which He Himself has but is not exercising.

*** Erroneous Explanations of the Facts in History**

Historical explanations that do not deny the deity of Christ in words but are erroneous have in one way or another essentially failed to follow out Chalcedonian Christology consistently. Modalism antedated Chalcedon and did not deny that Christ was God in the flesh. But it is heretical by denying the biblical fact that there are ontologically real distinctions in a Trinity.

But other various mistaken theological explanations are based on theories not derived from Scripture or are based on erroneous interpretations of Scripture, and they can be very serious nonetheless.

The logically consistent account that is given in this book is derived entirely on what is revealed concerning the ontology of Christ Jesus and the Trinity. Theological constructions that are not deduced from what is revealed in Scripture are to be rejected as invalid, no matter how consistent they may seem with what is revealed. This is a fixed principle. Thus there are teachings of theological tradition that are not outrightly heretical some of which may possibly be true but are not accepted here.

Ontological Subordinationism asserted that the Son and Spirit emanated from God the Father. This is the teaching of the Council of Nicea. Christ's person and hypostasis is not equal to that of the God the Father but has its source in and is derived from Him. Apollinarianism compromises the humanity of Christ by denying that Christ Jesus had human soul, but only human flesh. The result is that Jesus is not

fully man. This undermines biblical redemption. Monophysitism attempted to harmonize the divine nature and the human nature in Christ by combining or merging the properties of each and subsuming the human in the divine resulting in Christ Jesus not being fully man. Miaphysitism is opposed to Chalcedon by asserting that Christ's natures though distinct are united together directly. This results in treating the natures in the union as interacting with one another so that in effect they are a person, sometimes acting as divine and sometimes acting as human. Neo-Chalcedonianism confused the meaning of Chalcedon by obscuring the definition of hypostasis given at the First Council of Constantinople to try to make Chalcedon acceptable to the Miaphysites. Monothelitism undermines the humanity of Christ Jesus by placing his will outside the divine and human natures in the divine Person, creating a third kind of nature within the Person. This makes Christ Jesus fundamentally different in his ontology from other human beings, and so it also undermines biblical redemption. Traditionalism professes two natures in one divine Person but in effect adopts a combination of earlier errors often treating the natures as persons that act independently of each other.

(1) Ontological Subordinationism. This is the most prominent error, which was advanced very early by Christian apologists and others and perpetuated at the Council of Nicea. In general it was stated that there is one divine being, God the Father who in Himself is undivided without any internal divisions but in reality He is eternally three, conceived in various ways. In the divine being two, the Son and the Spirit, came forth from the internal substance of the Father who in essence were always there. At Nicea this was expressed as "out of the substance (Gk. ousia) of the Father, God out of God, light out of light." These phrases indicate that God the Son had his source in God the Father. In translation the words "out of" (Gk. ek) are often simply rendered "of," which doesn't indicate the

actual thought of the Creed.

Biblical warrant from Scripture was found for this in the Son being begotten of the Father and the Spirit proceeding from the Father (and the Son). In more developed form this has been retained historically with some modification in the doctrine of the eternal generation of God the Son and the eternal precession of the Holy Spirit. Inherently in this view Jesus cannot be ontologically self-existent. This is completely contradictory to Jesus being identified directly as self-existent Yahweh God. Historically John Calvin was criticized severely for asserting that God the Son was autotheos, meaning God in Himself, essentially self-existent. At the same time it is believed Calvin held that the Son was eternally begotten of the Father. This is contradictory to each of the three hypostases of the Trinity being directly identified with Yahweh God who revealed Himself as I AM, self-existent.

(2) Apollinarianism. Apollinarius was a disciple of Athanasius and became a close associate. It is possible that some of what is attributed to Athanasius came from Apollinarius. Apollinarius taught that in the incarnation God came down and took on only human flesh but not a human soul. The result would be that Jesus would not be fully human as Scripture indicates He must be and with so He could not be a substitutionary sacrifice to atone for our sins. Apollinarianism was actually condemned in the Synodical Letter of the Council of Constantinople in 382.

(3) Monophysitism. This is the teaching of Eutyches mentioned earlier that the divine and human natures merged in the incarnation with a mixing of attributes. This was condemned at the Council of Chalcedon. Few held this.

(4) Miaphysitism. This differs from monophysitism by asserting that there is no merger of the divine and human natures, but rather a union of the two natures together that

remain distinct from one another but interact in such a way that they together are in effect the person, the hypostasis of Christ. Diascorus, himself, interpreted Cyril's words in this way, and not as Eutyches taught. However, this makes the divine hypostasis of Christ after the incarnation different from the divine hypostasis before the incarnation. The divine hypostasis changes, which is impossible. But if it is maintained the the hypostasis is distinct from the combined union of distinct natures, then the interaction between natures still in effect is a mixing of natures. Technically it is not monophysitism, but it looks like it.

(5) Neo-Chalcedonianism. The Neo-Chalcedonians interpreted Chalcedon to make it acceptable to Miaphysites by redefining hypostasis from the definition at the First Council of Chalcedon, that it referred a person as something particular and distinct from a substance, to being an instance of a substance, a nature itself. This redefinition would imply that three hypostases in the Trinity would be three natures in a divine substance, which would be tritheism, but which Neo-Chalcedonians rejected. Thus, it introduced confusion by having one definition of hypostasis for the Trinity and a different definition of hypostasis for Christ Jesus for Christology.

(6) Monothelitism. Monothelitism places the will in the hypostasis of Christ Jesus rather than in his natures. The result is that Jesus doesn't have a human nature with a human will. The will must be only a divine will since the hypostasis is the same before the incarnation and in the incarnation. That contradicts Jesus who distinguished his will from that of the will of God the Father. But Jesus' will when He distinguished it from the will of the Father must be a human will, which if in the hypostasis would make his hypostasis a human one, which is impossible.

*** Conclusion.**

The main conclusions of the councils of the church in

history affirm the conclusions reached in the preceeding chapter: that there are three distinct hypostases that are aspects of the one divine being; that one of these, called in Scripture the Word (Logos), came into the world with a human nature in addition to the divine nature; that these natures are distinct in union with the one divine hypostasis so that God became fully human in Jesus; and that there are wills that lie in each of the natures of the one person and hypostasis.

****CHAPTER 5** CHRIST IN THE ECONOMY OF GOD**

In previous chapters we gave the overtly stated facts of Scripture and what must be deduced from the facts concerning the ontology of Christ and God. This needs to be related to what God planned before the foundation of the world to take place in creation and redemption. That is what we take up in this chapter, relating what God has revealed about this in connection with the deduced ontology. Here we proceed in complete consistency with and on the basis of the conclusions of Chapters 3 and 4.

The divine hypostases are indissolubly connected with the selves of the Trinity. On the one hand Persons as divine selves are ontological and not mere roles. On the other hand the Person in Jesus in his personhood is single and not multiple because his hypostasis is revealed as a distinct self and personal. Christ in his deity is revealed to be the incarnate God by being identified as Yahweh even when in the state of humiliation. But this is presented in Scripture economically, that is, within time according to the plan of God before the foundation of the world. The most striking feature of God's economy is the self-chosen position of subordination of Jesus as the incarnate divine being in his state of humiliation. It goes so far that the very term God is involved so that Jesus though God in ontology does not have the position of Godhood.

***1* Selfhood and Person in Jesus**

1. Jesus' Person is to be distinguished from his Personage

In the incarnation there was a hypostatic union, a union of the divine nature and the human nature together with one person and one hypostasis. The one person and hypostasis is that of the eternal Word or Logos, a Person of the Trinity. So the objection has been made: "Natures, even personal ones, don't grow in wisdom, thirst and die, people do and the Second Person of the Trinity can, according to His divine nature, do none of these things." "So if Jesus is only a divine Person, and not a human person, how can he grow in wisdom, have thirst and die?"

The problem here is that there is a failure to distinguish the person and hypostasis in itself from what is functioning as a person in the common usage of the term. There is a real difference that needs to be explained. So how is the person with his unique life-experiences to be distinguished from the ontological term person? The ontological term person refers to identity. Whether a baby, a young person, or a adult the person is the same person. That doesn't change.

And this is true also for the ontological term nature, which is the same human nature throughout one's life. But what is physical or refers to personal character and abilities change. A distinct term can be used to clarify the difference between what a person is ontologically and what a person becomes in his life-history. We propose using the word personage for the latter.

The word personage is used to refer to someone that is of distinction, a celebrity, or important in history. This is the word as a loan word from French. The word is also used of a character in a play (similar in sense to persona and prosopon). But personage (with one "n") was originally used in English more generally of an individual. It has come down as an individual with unusual characteristics.

This word could be used to refer to the distinctive background by which someone is identified, the accumulated "accidents" of their background.

So now we may answer the objection. The person of God the Word does not change in the incarnation, but is and remains the same in the God-man Jesus, but his personage does change. He grows, suffers and dies in his personage, which involves action and experience in his human nature. The personage is the result of what takes place in the life-history of the person and exists through operations taking place in the nature.

Another way of expressing it, if one can use the language of "according to" a nature, is that the Second Person of the Trinity can do these things according to his human nature. Jesus did develop a human personality through the life-history of his personage. But this personality did not involve any change in the human nature itself, which is something fixed by the way being human is defined and an individual is defined. The human nature has all the capabilities that are necessary to "personality," but it does not in itself make a personage.

To carry it out further, it cannot be said that the growth is in the divine person of Christ which is ontologically immutable and it cannot be said that the growth takes place properly in the nature itself, which is defined to consist of what is common to all human beings and does not change. It takes place by what have been called, using philosophical terminology, human "accidents." Here God enters time and history so what is experienced in the human nature is his.

This has been brought up because it is important to distinguish what is experienced from the person or hypostasis. What is experienced is in a nature, but the experience belongs to the person or hypostasis and not the nature and is background for the matter of selfhood.

2. Selfhood is ontological

The other term that must be considered in addition to person is self. Selfhood is ontological and not a role. The idea that persons in the divine being are only roles in a cosmic drama is contrary to the data of Scripture that the divine hypostases exist distinctly and as selves prior to the creation. The three selves as they exist in time, if they were different characters of a single person exhibited only in a cosmic drama, would resolve the discrepancy between the threeness of persons and singleness of the divine being, but there is not the slightest hint of any kind of such a cosmic drama, so immediately this has to be judged to be a speculative solution and invalid. But even more significantly Scripture shows that the selves are identified as existing prior to the creation which would be before taking a role in a cosmic drama and so would be impossible. This can be seen in different passages in Scripture:

There are references to Jesus as Yahweh as a distinct divine hypostasis existing before creation (Chapter 2, section 7):

(7) Creation by Yahweh. Heb. 1:10-12 = Psa. 102:25-27. Jesus existed as Yahweh before creation since everything that was created was through Him. And Jesus existed as the Word (Logos) as this creator in John 1:1-2.

(8) The first and the last. Rev. 1:17-18; 2:8; 22:13, 16 = Isaiah 41:4; 44:6; 48:12, 17.

Selfhood is also indicated of God the Father being declared to have loved Jesus before the foundation of the world:

John 17:24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

Love is on the part of a conscious self for another.

That selfhood is ontological can also be seen in references to God before the foundation of the world relating to the plan of redemption before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

2Tim. 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

Tit 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

1Pet. 1:20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

Choosing, purposing, promising and foreordaining are on the part of a conscious self relating to the Person of God the Father.

This refutes each self as a single acting subject taking mere roles, which can only refer to what takes place within the creation. But on the other hand God's selfhood is not an aspect of the single divine nature, otherwise there would be only one self in God even within the creation. Each hypostasis has or is a distinct self. And this means that when it comes to Jesus, his selfhood is connected with his hypostasis rather than either or both the divine nature and human nature. If it is rather in the nature, it would make the hypostasis only a metaphysical placeholder rather than a real acting self.

3. Selfhood refers to a single self-consciousness.

In Christ Jesus there is the single divine hypostasis that is of one of the Trinity. Within time within the incarnation this is exhibited as a single self, an "I" who addresses another hypostasis, the Father, as a "You/Thou."

But a self is by definition an "I" having a consciousness of itself in its existence, which is an activity of the hypostasis. And since each hypostasis of the Trinity is a distinct and single, the self-consciousness connected with it must also be single. This means there is only a single self-consciousness for each hypostasis of the Trinity. In Christ Jesus therefore it follows that there is a single self-consciousness because He is a divine hypostasis with a single self. It would be completely inconsistent to recognize that selfhood is connected only with the divine hypostases and not the divine nature, but then say that in the incarnation the self is connected with both natures. On earth, in his state of humiliation Jesus' consciousness of Himself is therefore not to be attributed to his human nature, but his divine hypostasis. Again it must be emphasized that self-consciousness is not a property of a nature, otherwise there would be two in Him, one for the divine nature and one for the human nature. And again that would mean two selves, two "I's," which would imply two hypostases in Christ Jesus. And that is impossible because the divine selves exist and are distinct prior to creation.

What this means is that each hypostasis and person has a single self. A hypostasis does not have two selves. In Jesus there were not two selves, a human self and a divine self. He was and is one hypostasis acting as a single self acting in either the human nature or the divine nature. And in Jesus the consciousness of the self is an activity of his single divine hypostasis. We can dismiss the idea of multiple personalities because those are psychological abnormalities through action in a single human nature, and we have here two different natures, a divine nature and a human nature, not one.

Of course, the activity of Jesus' divine hypostasis in his human nature does not have to be continual for the his divine self to exist. The existence or lack of existence of activities do not change the ontology of something. In human beings the self is there when they are asleep, so it is

not just a state of consciousness, though there must be consciousness for one to experience self-consciousness. And in human experience, Jesus' consciousness of being a divine person does not have to exist when He was a baby. It can come to Him later in life as an activity of his divine hypostasis. It means that a particular activity of even a divine hypostasis does not have to be continual in time.

But, of course, that does not mean that the divine being slumbers or sleeps, as Scripture assures (Psa. 121:4).

It might be claimed that this does not in itself exclude parallel conscious actions on the part of one hypostasis, action in the divine nature on the one hand and the human nature on the other. Two activities occurring simultaneously would be conceived to be taking place in the two different natures. The existence of two different natures, however, complicates matters. Self-consciousness and consciousness of experience are necessarily coordinated. It is impossible to conceive of consciousness of experience and action without implicit consciousness of self at the same time in a sentient being. It is a consciousness of experience for one's self. In human beings something can happen to them without them experiencing it or being aware, but this does not change the relation between conscious experience and self-consciousness. When looked at properly they are still necessarily coordinated or have to exist together.

But in Jesus, with two natures, the consciousness involves knowledge and memory concerning what is experienced and what is voluntarily determined by the person. So when the divine hypostasis is acting with the knowledge and memory of the divine nature, the self in its consciousness involves the knowledge and memory of the divine nature. But when the same divine hypostasis is acting with the knowledge and memory of the human nature, the self in its consciousness involves the knowledge and memory that resides in the human nature. In addition, these are unequal in levels of knowledge and memory. Thus when the

hypostasis of Jesus is operating in the divine nature the consciousness of his self is at a different level from when the hypostasis is operating in the human nature. And when operating in the divine nature Jesus' self has the omniscience of God, so that He can bring to mind all that is in Jesus' human nature, but when operating in the human nature Jesus' self does not have omniscience and so depends on divine revelation of Scripture and what God in the other hypostases may reveal directly to Him.

Since the operation of will on the part of the hypostasis of Jesus occurs in one of two natures, it follows that the choice to operate in the divine nature rather than the human nature takes place by an act of the human will. And vice versa, when the choice is in the divine nature to operate in the human nature it takes place by an act of the divine will in the divine nature. There cannot be a choice that takes place outside of the currently operating nature, otherwise an act of will would be taking place in Jesus' hypostasis rather than a nature. To put it in the hypostasis or person would imply the error of monothelism. Yet all along, the act of will in whichever nature is in operation it occurs belongs to the single divine hypostasis of Jesus.

***2* The Ontological Trinity versus the Economic Trinity**

The fact that only God the Father is sovereign when Jesus was in a state of humiliation on earth makes it necessary to distinguish Jesus as the divine being in the state of humiliation within the economy or plan of God from Jesus as the divine being outside of this state. This extends to the three in God in the entire economy of creation and redemption. The terms ontological Trinity, immanent Trinity and economic Trinity have been used in theological literature to refer to the divine being in relation to himself and in relation to the created world.

In the introduction to the chapter we used the word

economy but without defining it. Historically the term economy was used to refer to God's plan worked out in the incarnation in contrast to everything else. It was only in the period after the Reformation that the idea of the covenant of redemption was added, and still later that creation was added to bring in all the persons of the Trinity into the entire economy of creation and redemption, which includes the fall into sin and the final consumation. Distinguishing the ontological and economic with regard to the Trinity is actually a late development in the history of theology. But the distinction is of great importance and it is necessary use the terms with careful discrimination.

The ontological Trinity refers to what is revealed concerning the one true God that is necessary and inherent to God's being. The economic Trinity refers to the divine being as He relates to the divine works of creation and redemption in actual time. The economic Trinity as such refers to what God does in creation according to the plan of God in eternity; it does not refer to what happens prior to the actual creation. The "economy" is another name for the "plan" of creation and redemption in its actual outworking. In time, what happens is not strictly speaking the plan itself, but the execution of the plan. In that way, the economic Trinity is the working of the persons of the Trinity in time, but their functions are according to plan. This is the preferred way of defining the term economy. But it must kept clear that there must be a distinction between the planning within the divine counsel and the plan which is the outcome of the divine counsel. The economy refers to the completed plan, and the economic Trinity indicates the actual roles of the persons in this completed plan. But the planning is something else. Furthermore the the planning is not something inherent to what is necessary and inherent to being, so the planning is also distinct from the ontological Trinity. If the planning were inherent to the divine being there could be no voluntary choice on the part of the divine being. In that case, the creation itself would have been necessary apart from the will of God.

We have referred to God's economy of creation in addition to the plan or economy of redemption. This is because of different things that God does in time. Scripture indicates that God's plan of redemption was in place before the creation, and his relation to man in the creation and the fall of man into sin is presupposed in redemption. So the creation and the time element cannot be omitted in considering the relation of the hypostases of God to what God does in redemption.

It is the identity of the three of the Trinity as Yahweh with differing designations for their roles in time that identifies the economic Trinity. And it is because the identity of each of the three as a hypostasis connected with a distinct self, that we can see the connection with the roles in God's economy. In themselves each as a self is not the role which changes in time because in themselves they are immutable and cannot change, and since they existed before the creation and therefore before the economy. But each self exists independently in themselves apart from the role or the designation for them in their roles. This is why, the distinct identity of the persons as selves in themselves in distinct roles was shown in the first section.

One of the Trinity takes the role of becoming incarnate and accomplishing the work of redemption to save human beings and is identified as Son. However, before coming to do this He is identified as the Word (Logos) rather than Son through whom everything was created that was created. Another of the Trinity called the Holy Spirit acted and acts within the created world to accomplish the purposes of God. Another called the Father might be looked on as having a supervisory role. Their roles take place in the creation within time. The designations Father, Son, and Spirit are clearly related to these roles of the ontologically distinct hypostasis or Persons.

One of the things we want to know is how the hypostases as ontological realities relate in terminology with the roles of

the hypostases in time. The divine name of Yahweh links the terms Father, Son, and Spirit as hypostases that are known to be distinct to the divine being ontologically.

First, Jesus is identified as Yahweh in his role in his state of humiliation distinct from this same ontological designation outside of that state:

The points from Chapter 2, section 4 show that Jesus is identified as Yahweh in his state of humiliation:

(1) The glory of Yahweh, John 12:41 = Isaiah6:1-10. Refers to Jesus in his ministry.

(2) Preparation for the way of Yahweh, Matt. 3:1-3; Maerk 1:2-4; Luke 3:2-4; John 1:19-23 = Isaiah40:3

(3) Yahweh's glory seen, John 12:41 = Isaiah6:1-10

(4) Yahweh a stone of stumbling, 1Pet. 2:8 = Isaiah 8:13-14

(5) Yahweh pierced, John 19:34-37; Rev. 1:7 = Zec 12:10

(6) Yahweh appraised for thirty pieces of silver, Matt. 26:15; 27:9 = Zec 11:13

This shows Jesus identified as Yahweh and known to be distinct from God the Father in his role, but being referred to in the ontological designation as Yahweh, yet in the state of humiliation. And this state is in the economy of redemption. The point is that the name Yahweh appears in the Old Testament passage referring to Christ Jesus who is a divine hypostasis in the state of humiliation and this is an ontological identification. It is in the last three above that the humiliation is explicit.

Second, God the Father is identified as Yahweh when acting to raise Christ Jesus from the dead.

In Acts 2:24 Peter on the day of Pentecost explains that Christ Jesus had been raised from the dead, "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it," Then Peter cites Psalm 16:8-11 to prove this:

Acts 2:25 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

26 Therefore did my heart rejoyce, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

In the Psalm it is as follows:

Psa. 16:8 ¶ I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Then Peter concludes with Jesus' resurrection:

Acts 2:29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

Here Yahweh is fortold to raise up his Holy One, Christ Jesus. But it is Yahweh as God the Father who is Yahweh acting in the economy of redemption. This shows that in the economy the one who acts is identified by the ontological name Yahweh and not just as God having a position of authority in a role within the economic Trinity. It is one spoken of as Yahweh, an ontological identification, who is involved in the divine economy.

So distinct hypostases of the Trinity as ontologically distinct realities are involved in separate roles within the economy of God. It is not just a verbal expression.

In conclusion, we see that ontologically different hypostases of the Trinity that are not distinctly identified as such in the Old Testament clearly refer to named persons in the New Testament and these have been referred to in theological terminology as persons in what can be called the economic Trinity.

***3* Godhood a Position**

In terms of ordinary Christian thought Jesus says something that is most amazing, that He is not God.

Christ's deity is revealed in the fact of Him being the incarnate Yahweh. And this is indicated most clearly by the identification of Jesus as Yahweh even when in the state of humiliation. But this is presented to us with Him in the self-chosen position of subordination. It goes so far that the very term God is involved so that Jesus does not have the position of Godhood.

1. The Only True God

It is a fact that Jesus in prayer referred to God the Father as the only true God.

This is listed as the last of the facts in Chapter 2 (section 9). Here it is stated again:

John 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

The fact is repeated again by the Apostle Paul in 1Cor. 8:6:

1Cor. 8:6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

How Jesus can be Yahweh and yet his Father alone is God is a mystery that demands an explanation. But these are exactly what is stated in Scripture.

2. Jesus' definition of Godhood

What Jesus said to the Pharisees removes the mystery of how his Father can be said to be the only true God. In John 10:32-35:

John 10:32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

This is a reference to Psalm 82:6

Psa. 82:1 God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.

2 How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

3 Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

4 Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.

5 They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

6 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.

Jesus explains that the term god refers to a position of great authority. Unless the term God on the basis of Scripture refers to position rather than a supernatural being it could not be applied to judges in Israel. Jesus appealed to the authority of Scripture for this meaning of the term God. He is saying that this is the sense in which the term should be used. Saying it has another meaning is to directly reject what Jesus said on the authority of the divinely inspired Old Testament Scripture.

On this basis, because Jesus, who is in fact Yahweh, has taken a position of submission in a state of humiliation on earth, He Himself is not in a position of supreme authority. The Father only is in such a position and thus "God."

3. The predominant use of the word God when used alone refers to God the Father.

Throughout the New Testament there are many statements that in wording distinguish one referred to as God from the Lord Jesus Christ. This confirms that only God the Father is properly termed God until Christ Jesus is exalted to a position of Godhood. The usage in Scripture indicating this is extensive:

The word God having reference only to the Father of Christ:

Rom. 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

1Cor. 6:14 And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Rom. 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Rom. 5:11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

Rom. 6:11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom. 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom. 7:25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

1Cor. 15:57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

And what is through a person is naturally distinguished from the originator of what is done.

The Lord thy God as one other than Jesus:

Matt. 4:7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Matt. 4:10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Mark 16:19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

Luke 4:8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Luke 4:12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

A triadic affirmation:

2Cor. 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of

God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.
Amen.

Here the word God refers to God the Father without using the word father.

God is referred to as invisible and so cannot be Jesus but refers to God the Father:

Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

1Tim. 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

A multitude of passages in which the term God and Father occur together showing that the Father has the position of being God (35x):

Gal. 1:3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,

Gal. 1:4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

Gal. 4:6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

Eph 1:2 Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

Eph 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Eph 5:20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

Eph 6:23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Phil. 1:2 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Phil. 2:11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Phil. 4:20 Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Col. 1:2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Col. 1:3 We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

Col. 2:2 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

Col. 3:17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

1Th 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1Th 1:3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

1Th 3:11 Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

1Th 3:13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

2Th 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

2Th 1:2 Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2Th 2:16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,

1Ti 1:2 Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

2Ti 1:2 To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Tit 1:4 To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Philem. 1:3 Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

James 1:27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the

Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

James 3:9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

1Pet. 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

1Pet. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

2Pet. 1:17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

2John 1:3 Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

Jude 1:1 Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:

Rev. 1:6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

The overwhelming usage in Scripture is that the term God refers to God the Father, Jesus' Father, and not Jesus Himself.

4. Exceptions to God referring only to God the Father.

On the other hand Jesus is addressed or recognized as God. How are these exceptions to be explained?

John 20:28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

In this case Jesus could be God to Thomas personally, indicating his authority in his resurrected state. But there is another way of looking at it. In Old Testament terms He is both Yahweh and Adonai, but in Greek that would come out LORD and Lord. It is likely that the first refers to Jesus being Yahweh and the second refers to Him being Adonai, where Adonai is the corresponding word in Hebrew for having authority.

Tit. 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

This indicates Jesus in his glorified state in which He is given the position of power and great authority as God, in the future. In the present He is awaiting the time his enemies will be made his footstool and He has that power and authority: Psalm 110:1 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. And Jesus has been raised to the right hand of God the Father.

2 Pet. 1:1 Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Here the righteousness is the divine righteousness of Jesus in his deity as well as his humanity in redemption. So this actually is exceptional to the term God being positional because referring to his deity ontologically.

Heb. 1:8 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

This is from Psalm 45:6-7:

Ps. 45:6 Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.

7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

This exemplifies Godhood as a position in which the Son is anointed to the position of being God, by another who is God, which is to be understood as God the Father.

In summary, it is most clear that in the incarnation, Jesus takes the position of one who is under God the Father as a subordinate. Jesus states this clearly everywhere. The meaning of "God" is to be defined to be one of position and not ontology. This is Jesus' definition of the meaning of the term God. To reject this is to reject what Jesus asserted. It is the name Yahweh that indicates ontology. Jesus in his incarnation is Yahweh identifying Him as the divine being, but in position as the God-man and God incarnate, and in his state of humiliation, In that state only his Father is God. But when exalted to rule He again takes the position of Godhood that He had before the incarnation.

What about God before the foundation of the world? In that circumstance Jesus had a position of power and glory the same as his Father:

John 17:5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

And through Jesus as the Word everything that exists was made through Him.

So the term God can apply to the entire Trinity before the creation.

***4* Divine Counsel in the Immanent Trinity**

There are things in Scripture that connect directly with what was antecedent to time and creation, yet does not refer to the ontology of the divine being. The Word (Logos) clearly refers what was antecedent to creation, existing in the beginning. The Word or Logos is God yet distinct from the Father, and Scripture says so. The context refers to what is inherent and so ontological to the divine being. There are other statements however concerning what God has decided voluntarily antecedent to time and creation. That means that in terms of the proper definition of the economy of God there are things that are neither inherent and part of the ontological Trinity nor economic and part of the economic Trinity.

This is where the term immanent Trinity should be used in distinction from the ontological Trinity and the economic Trinity proper. Usually the term immanent Trinity is used as a synonym for the ontological Trinity. but this completely leaves out things that are not part of what God has done in creation in time nor part of God's inherent being. So we will use the term immanent Trinity to include God's voluntary choices in his planning within the counsel of God in eternity.

The fact that God freely chose to establish the plan of creation and redemption should be obvious. Creation and redemption are not inherent and necessary to God's being. It came about through the sovereign, voluntary will of God. God did not have to create anything to be Himself.

Both the crucifixion and election imply details concerning the plan of redemption antecedent to time and creation. It is to be observed that this relates to what God has planned before time and creation concerning what takes place in time and creation. Nothing here refers to what is inherent and fixed in the nature of God, but entirely to what

God does. The planning of creation and redemption is antecedent to what happens in the created order in time and so does not refer to the economic Trinity in its proper sense. Yet these things are not inherent and necessary to the being of God. They relate to the economy of God in creation and redemption but refer to what occurred within the divine counsel of God in planning the events and relationships prior to them happening. That planning was prior to the creation itself. And the creation is not something that is inherent, necessary and fixed in the being of God, otherwise creation is something that is part of God. God would have no choice but to create it because it would be a part of his very being. God freely and voluntarily chose to create and did not have to create anything at all for him to exist. Creation is not a part of God's being, nature or essence. There has to be what has been termed the counsel of God in which God planned the economy of creation and redemption.

Of course there are things about what is inherent in the divine being that are revealed by what God does in relation to his creation. There is an implied ontology in these things. But one must be careful not to reason incorrectly, since they actually only reveal something about the way God created things consistent with his own nature. It is beyond the scope of this book on Christ's deity to detail all that is given about God in relation to his creation.

What is emphasized here is that there is something immanent to the divine being that is neither ontological nor economic, the divine counsel which involves voluntary choice on God's part. We must not treat everything that is eternal as though it is all inherently necessary and fixed.

***5* Christ Jesus in the Divine Economy**

This book is devoted to the ontology of Christ's deity rather than Christology in general. This must, however, be interrelated to the broader scope of Christology. We must

take care to define terms accurately. The word Christ is not a name for Jesus of Nazareth, but is a title for the person of the incarnate Yahweh in connection with the promises of God prophesied in the Old and New Testaments concerning salvation.

The divine economy is the whole program of creation and redemption through Christ, God's overall plan for man.

What are the elements of the divine economy? It consists of God's plan by which He created the world and allowed man to fall into sin, but to call out and save many for his glory by the redemption accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ and bring about complete victory over the power of evil in the created world. Here we are concerned with that part of the divine economy in which the divine being God Himself planned to come down to earth in person to accomplish that redemption and bring victory.

**** The Promises and Covenants***

In Scripture the divine economy is introduced through promises and covenants in which the divine being commits Himself to certain promised actions. These commitments and promises should be surveyed and related to the overall plan or economy. One thing that should be done is to summarize the logic referring to God's economy as the economy of both creation and redemption, not just incarnation or redemption. This was pointed out above. Before creation certain things were planned. Central in the divine economy of creation and redemption is God coming to earth to accomplish redemption of man being incarnate as the God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ. But this was revealed in history in stages to be taken on faith. The New Testament makes absolutely clear that eternal salvation has always been by grace through faith and never by what one does.

After the fall of mankind into sin by the sin of Adam, God

promised that a descendant of Eve would have victory over the Serpent. It was a promise of retribution. It is stated in Gen. 3:

Gen 3:14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

But there was also a promise of eventual salvation, though it was not stated explicitly here in Scripture. We know this because we know the truth that salvation has always come the same way by grace through faith in the one who would provide redemption from sin by his own sacrifice. So we know that Adam and Eve were saved through knowing and believing in Him. God put his stamp of approval on the animal sacrifice of Abel over the offering of Cain, and it is later stated explicitly that the blood of the sacrifice makes atonement for the soul.

The promise and covenant with Abraham indicated that all people will be blessed through the seed of Abraham. The promise is carried on and narrowed through Isaac, Jacob, and Judah. And the Old Testament unfolds Him through coming as a unique person of the future. Through what Christians know by the unction of the Holy Spirit it is known that this Promised One through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Judah is Christ Jesus.

After his resurrection Jesus, when talking to disciples on the road to Emmaus, explained that things concerning Himself were in all the Scripture of the Old Testament (Luke 24:27)

Luke 24:27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

For it to be in all the Scripture it had to exist in various ways, through promises and prophecies, through appearances of Yahweh God Himself, and through what are called Types, such as various God-ordained sacrifices, people and events. Much of what is predicted about Jesus is not stated explicitly. It must be discerned that what Scripture says about Yahweh intervening in history must apply to the Promised One.

****The Promised Messiah***

First, we need to understand what is meant by Christ when we read that Jesus is the Christ. Christ was prophesied and promised in the Old Testament. And the primary confession in the New Testament is that Jesus is the Christ. But the word Christ is a translation for Anointed One, the Messiah.

The term Messiah (in transcription, Mashiach) is used directly referring in the Old Testament to a future person. The word itself simply means anointed one. Priests, kings, and prophets were all inducted into their positions by being anointed. They were all anointed ones. But where the term Mashiach refers to one coming in the future it always refers to a ruler.

A coming ruler is seen in Gen. 49:10

Gen. 49:10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

And it is seen also in the song of Hannah, which was before the time of David:

1 Sam 2:10 The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.

Specifically the future ruler in Scripture is a descendant of King David. God made a covenant with David, the man

after God's own heart, promising him an eternal kingdom that would never end (2 Sam 7:11-16). The future king who shall judge the ends of the earth is identified in Scripture to be a descendant of David.

2 Sam. 7:11 And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house.

12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

The rest of the Old Testament fills out further about this descendant of David. There will be a hiatus in the kingdom which is cut off from the descendants of Solomon by sin that is explained in Jeremiah 23:1-8 and 33:15-26. It was Solomon who built the temple stated here. But it was not to be an everlasting dynasty. The kingdom and the throne promised here must be distinguished from the dynasty coming through Solomon. Scripture is clear that Yahweh has driven the descendants of Israel out of their land into other countries. But they will be regathered as indicated in Isaiah and the Messiah, the righteous branch of David, will reign. The hiatus in the actual kingdom is mentioned specifically in Hos 3:4-5.

Hos 3:4 For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim:

5 Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the

LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.

The promise to David is reflected in the Psalms. In Psalm 89:3-4 and 132:11-17 the throne or rule of the Messiah will be everlasting. In Psalm 72:1-11 it will include dominion to the ends of the earth. It will be fulfilled in a son, meaning not a dynasty but an individual descendant who is the rightful heir to the throne. Psalm 2 refers to the Messiah because dominion to the ends of the earth is promised if requested. In Isaiah9:2 the individual will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Isaiah11:1-12 indicates an idillic time when the dispersed of Israel will be regathered and Gentiles will seek the Messiah. It is most significant that the Messiah will have the name Yahweh, Yahweh Our Righteousness. This is expressed as a name of identification, rather than a descriptive name, written out with the complete tetragrammaton, YHWH, rather than YH. At other places in Scripture (Isaiah9:2; Jer 23:6; 33:16) we also see the same identification. The future ruler in Israel that comes from Bethlehem must be the Messiah referred to as coming from the same place as David (Mic 5:2). But He will be one who has existed from olden times in the past. It is one who is more than a descendant of David. The coming of a new David, would be a single individual, one shepherd, who would shepherd God's people (Ezek 34:23-24). And the Messiah is also referred as being like the son of man who is given a universal and everlasting dominion (Dan 7:13-14).

In addition to passages that have a direct reference to the Messiah as the descendant of David there are passages that refer to the messianic era, such as Isaiah35:1-10. in which miracles of healing will take place. This is found also in Isaiah42:1-7 in which blind eyes are opened and Messiah is called the servant of Yahweh given as a covenant to the Gentiles.

Of course, Psa 2:1-12 is Messianic. Isaiah35:5-6 refers to

healings in Messianic times. Isaiah40:1-11 is Messianic referring to the arm of Yahweh ruling for Him and feeding his flock like a shepherd. Isaiah40:9 is in an entirely Messianic context, and states that their God may be beheld visibly. In Hag 2:6-7 the reference to the desire of all nations is a reference to the Messiah. Mal 3:1-3 is definitely Messianic referring to Yahweh's messenger who will purge the priesthood. Job 19:25-26 is Messianic referring to seeing God in the flesh.

What this means is that the Messiah is far more than a political liberator. With Him there is great blessing and salvation from sin. It is a huge error to fragment Scripture to see the Messiah as only a coming Davidic king in spite of the fact that Scripture only refers directly to the Anointed One (Mashiach) as a ruler who is a descendant of David. He is an anointed prophet like Moses (Deut. 18:18) and an anointed priest after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 5:10). He is the fulfillment of all promises of the Coming One, starting with promise to Adam and Eve. He brings true salvation, life, and judgment necessary for individual people to be right with God rather under eternal judgment and wrath. He comes to bring about the divine economy of God.

What Judaism has done without acknowledging it is to change the message of the Bible to refer merely to this earthly life with the pretence, condemned by the prophets, that keeping the externals of the Mosaic law is all that God requires. This makes one who is the Messiah bring only a fulfillment for the present earthly life. And they reject Jesus because He did not fulfill the political Messianic promises when He was alive on the earth. So Jews reject Jesus to be Messiah because He did not fulfill all that they conceive Messiah will accomplish, but they ignore what He did fulfill, as Jesus pointed out.

The Messiah will indeed have a universal but also an everlasting dominion but also the Messiah as a prince is

referred to as being cut off (Dan 9:25-26) and in a future time when a fountain is opened for sin and uncleanness (Zech 12:8-13:1) Yahweh says they will look on me whom they have pierced (v 9-10). There is an indication of the death of the Messiah in connection with the future times being identified as Yahweh. The coming King will be Yahweh (Zeph 3:15), when judgment are taken away and the enemies of Israel are removed.

Zeph. 3:15 The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.

So in Scripture we see the Coming One identified both as the Messiah a descendant of David and being referred to as the divine being, as Yahweh. This is also reflected in places where Yahweh declares that He Himself will come to earth (Psa 24:7-10; Mic. 1:3; Zech. 2:10-11; 8:3; Ezek. 43:7, 9).

What all this means is that the Messiah is Yahweh in the economic Trinity, coming to accomplish what Yahweh God determined in Himself before the foundation of the world, determined in the counsel of creation and redemption.

Jesus, when He was alive on earth, never claimed to fulfill the Messianic promises. That was not his message. That is a striking fact. He did not appeal to completely fulfilled prophecy. He appealed to what God did through Him in his earthly ministry for his authority to speak the words of God the Father and fulfill what Scripture said would be done. Jesus cited Isaiah 61 but stopped short of including the day of vengeance:

Isa. 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of

vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

This is what Jesus cited in the synagogue at Nazareth. The people attempted to kill Him. Jesus Himself did not call on people to accept Him because He fulfilled Messianic prophecy though that is what He did. Jesus called on people to accept that God sent Him and that He should be believed on the basis of the miracles that were performed:

John 5:36 But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

John 10:37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

John 14:11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

What this means is that if one looks only at the direct references to Messiah as presented in the Old Testament one would not find Messiah in all the Old Testament Scripture. Yet Jesus explained how things concerning Himself were found in all the Old Testament Scripture. Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, but He is more than a mere Davidic Messiah.

The one portrayed as the Messiah is both a human descendant of David and One who is more than David, Yahweh Himself, which is what is given in the testimony of the New Testament. The Messiah is Yahweh God come to earth as a man with a human nature. As such the one identified as Messiah comes as incarnate God within the divine economy.

****Jesus the Messiah, Son of God,***

We have seen that the Messiah is more than a son or descendant of David. Repeatedly in the Old Testament expressions of deity are used in connection with the

Coming One. He is in fact identified as Yahweh. In the New Testament Jesus is not only identified as Yahweh, He is identified as the Messiah, and He is also referred to as the Son of God (Matt. 16:16; 26:63; Mark 1:1; Luke 4:41; John 6:69; 11:27; 20:31).

Matt. 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Matt. 26:63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

Mark 1:1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

Luke 4:41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

John 6:69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

John 11:27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world

John 20:31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

These all refer to the Son of God expressed together in conjunction with the term Christ. The conjunction indicates that the term Son of God refers to the same Person as the Messiah, who is both Yahweh God and the human descendant of David. This is the way the Messiah is presented in the Gospels. They indicate a recognition that one must understand the Messiah to be more than a mere human descendant of David.

Acts 8:37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Acts 9:20 And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

2John 1:3 Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the

Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

The above passages indicate something more by the term Son of God than Jesus being referred to as Christ or Messiah.

In Jesus' day there could have been two current conceptions of the Messiah, that Messiah would be only the Son of David and another that Messiah would be Son of God, directly connected with God Himself. Two conceptions.

In Matt. 26:63 the high priest clarified by adding the words "Son of God" to indicate Messiah in a higher sense, in a sense that made the Messiah equal to God the Father.

Matt. 26:63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.

Note that Jesus in speaking of Himself in reply did not use the words Son of God, but rather Son of man, referring to coming in future glory. When He referred to Himself here He referred to what He would be in the future. In essence He was clarifying the sense in which He accepted the term Son of God.

****The Term Son of God***

In Scripture it is clear that what is said about God the Father, Jesus, God's Son, and the Holy Spirit relate to the economic Trinity and relationships between them.

The question is whether what is seen here within the economy of creation and redemption implies the same

relationships in the ontological Trinity. It is one thing to find Christ, redemption, and the redeemed in the plan of God antecedent to time and creation, but it is another matter to derive fatherhood, sonship, and precession of the Spirit from Scripture as inherent and necessary to the divine being itself. This is not something to be assumed without deriving it as such from Scripture.

We know what happened in the history of the church. To refute the Arian heresy that Christ Jesus in his Person was a created being rather than uncreated deity Himself the church turned to the argument that Jesus was deity because generated out of the Person of God the Father, and so had the same nature as the Father, which would preclude Him from being created. But we know this is false because Scripture identifies Jesus Himself to be Yahweh God, and so self-existent which precludes Him having an origin in another Person. For this reason we need to discern the sense in which Scripture declares Jesus to be the Son of God.

Much of this depends on understanding the biblical terms son and father and how these are used in connection with God. There is considerable variation in this. So again it needs to be determined from Scripture precisely what is meant. We may start with sonship and fatherhood in general and then consider the term Son of God. In Scripture being a son is broader than biological generation, as is true in the English language also. In English one can be a son by adoption. And in the case of remarriage a son can be a son of the wife of a man but not biologically the son of the husband which is his father by marriage. The same is true in Scripture. In the case of Jesus there is a sense in which he was an adopted son of Joseph because Joseph was not his biological father. This is significant because Jesus was counted to be the heir to the throne of David through his father Joseph. In addition, a biological son was not counted to be a full son until he comes of age when he is formally adopted.

1. Sonship in general

In Scripture sonship is very much broader than in English. In the Bible, the term "son" expresses close relationship with someone or something. In its basic meaning it indicates origin, but it is also used to express close association or identification under other persons or things. Even when indicating origin, this term is not limited to one's immediate father or mother. It is commonly used of any descendant. One may also be called the "son" his family, his tribe, his people, his place of birth (city or country), or even circumstance of birth. The "father-son" terminology is also used in connection with kings and their proper successors. It is also used of servants, disciples and almost any situation in which someone is dependent on someone else. Those in an occupational group may be called sons. In addition the term "son" is used express some sort of resemblance to persons or things. Those with the same character may be regarded as sons of someone or something. It is simply another case of similarity to those in a group. It is not valid to say that sonship came to mean the nature of something.

In many cases the term son is rendered in different words in translation. It has been very common to render son or sons as children in English translations. In addition there are some of the uses mentioned above in which the translation has to use different words:

Gen 5:32 (son of 500 years instead of 500 years old); Gen 15:3 (servant instead of son); 1 Sam 20:31 (son of death); 2 Kings 14:14 (hostages for sons); Job 41:28 (son of a bow for arrow); Lam. 3:13 (sons of a quiver for arrows); Zec 4:14 (sons of oil for anointed); Matt. 9:15 (sons of the bridegroom for guests); Luke 10:6 (son of peace for man of peace); John 17:12 (son of destruction for damned person); Eph 2:2 (sons of disobedience for those who are disobedient). Then there are instances of personal

relationships that are not biological: I Sam 3:6; 24:16; 25:8; 2 Kings 2:12; 8:9; Matt. 9:2; 1 Ti 1:2; Tit 1:4; Philem. 10; 1 Pet. 5:13.

What is learned from all this is that being a son can mean a close usually subordinate relationship of some kind. This means that the term son of God could indicate some such close subordinate relationship.

2. Fatherhood in general

Being a father naturally refers to generation of offspring, but is not limited to that since sonship can have other meanings and fatherhood has a direct relationship to sonship..

The Nature of fatherhood

Being father means having headship over those who are children or sons:

This is what is basic in the father-son relationship, whether sonship is by generation, adoption, creation, special association or similarity in character.

Being father means having authority in his house.

Mal. 1:6 ¶ A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?

Father and mother are to be honored and obeyed:

Eph 6:2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)

Col. 3:20 Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is

well pleasing unto the Lord.

The actions of human fathers are to be modeled on the fatherhood of God:

Eph/ 3:14-15 I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

This explains ways in which God acts, such as with compassion, care for the weak and powerless, teaching, training and discipline.

Provision (Matt. 7:7-11)

Gentleness and compassion (Psa. 103:13):

Wisdom and instruction (Prov 4:1-2, 13)

Exhortation and Encouragement (1 Th 2:10-12; Eph 6:4; Pr 20:7; 22:6)

Discipline (Pr 3:12; 13 24; 19:18)

Providing an inheritance (Pr 13:22)

3. Son of God

The term son of God in itself does not indicate deity. This is shown by the fact that Angels are called sons of God: Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7. Mere human beings are called sons of God: Gen. 6:2,4 (mighty men of renown); Luke 3:38 (Adam); 2Sa 7:14 (Solomon). And Christians are sons of God by regeneration and adoption. In each case son of God indicates a special close relationship with God, either by direct creation or a special relationship by an a kind of adoption. As far as terminology is concerned this would be adequate to explain the term being applied to Jesus. He could be son of God simply in the sense of having a close relationship with God. The term son of God is obviously not limited to Jesus. It is wrong to simply go by the sound

of the words and jump to conclusions. Yet we have seen that the Coming One who was promised to bring redemption and victory was to be more than a human Davidic king alone. He has direct connection with God. In using the term son of God in Scripture, the meaning is not simple. It is necessary to see how it is used in Scripture to understand it.

**** Son of God by miraculous birth***

The miraculous birth of Jesus is consistent with being Son of God through the direct creation of his human nature in the incarnation. The incarnation is related directly in Scripture to connection with the announcement to Mary about Jesus:

Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the

Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

This is the very reason given for Jesus being called the Son of God. Being called Son of God is attributed to Jesus birth through the Holy Spirit and the power of God the Father in the incarnation as expressed in John 1:14, the Word, God, was made flesh. He was made flesh by the miraculous virgin birth. The incarnation of Jesus relates his Person in the Ontological Trinity, expressed by the term Word in the Gospel of John, to the Economic Trinity since the incarnation occurs in time.

The Parallel with Adam

The incarnation indicates a parallel with Adam, being created with a human nature. Jesus in his humanity was like Adam, created with a human nature. Scripture shows us that Jesus is another Adam a man who reverses what Adam did. He parallels Adam in Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15.

Rom. 5:14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

1Cor. 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

1Cor. 15:45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

And as God's Son Jesus was made of a woman under the law (Gal. 4:4) and was made in the incarnation like men in all things to be a priest in order to make reconciliation for sins (Heb. 2:17).

Gal. 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

Heb. 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

Since Adam was a son of God, Jesus, being like the first Adam, was human with a special relationship to God as a son of God. Yet this would be in harmony with his deity since we already know Jesus to be Yahweh. It would not refer to Him in his Person or hypostasis, but to having a created human nature. Therefore this cannot be used as an argument against the deity of Christ Jesus. Yet it would indicate what is human existing in the designation

Son of God. Jesus is in fact called another Adam (1Cor. 15:45).

Being in the image of God

Another parallel between Adam and Jesus concerns Adam being created in the image of God:

Gen. 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Scripture declares clearly that Christ Jesus is the image of God (2Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15). The idea of a parallel between Adam and Christ with regard to the image of God is striking. It is certainly used wrongly by unitarians - but it seems it is not used correctly for fear of seeming to support their error.

2Cor. 4:3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them

Col. 1:12 ¶ Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature

Scripture states we will have the image of Christ who is the image of God:

Rom. 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren

1Cor. 15:49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly

2Cor. 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Col. 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Christians will be changed into the image of Christ, but it will not be a deification. When Scripture says we will have the image of Christ it cannot mean that we will be changed into Gods. So having the image of Christ who is the image of God does not mean becoming divine beings. And so it does not in itself refer to something ontological. It indicates having the true image of God in an economic sense.

Another passage about Jesus being in the image of God is Heb. 1:3.

Heb. 1:1 ¶ God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

3 Who being the brightness of [his] glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Here the word image (Greek charakter) is different from the word (eikon) used in the preceeding passages. It is used to refer to exact copies of something. But, of course, copies are derivative and different from the originals. Such an image is not the original but a copy. Jesus is not an ontological copy of God, a second divine being. He is Yahweh Himself. This Scripture cannot refer to his ontological deity. It must refer to something else, which nevertheless is exactly true of the divine being.

As important as all of this is an image is always something that is exhibited and seen, which has to be in the created world. The fact that Jesus was the image of God is why

Jesus could say that if you had seen him, you had seen the Father:

John 14:9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

An image is something that can be seen. The Father is invisible so can't be seen, but nevertheless there must be something of Him that can be seen. But in connection with Jesus being in the image of God it is in any case something relating to the economy of creation and redemption and therefore in relation to God it has to refer to the economic Trinity, and not the ontological Trinity.

**** Son of God by Adoption***

Adoption is taking someone to be a son so that he can receive the privileges of the person who is his adoptive father and receive an inheritance from the father. In the ancient world a natural son was adopted by his natural father to receive his privileges.

In Scripture God says that He will be a father to King David's offspring. He takes him to be a son. It is an adoption. He receives privileges from God as his father. This is in the pivotal passage in which God promises that the Messiah will come from David. But in it there is the possibility of committing sin, which is impossible of the Messiah since the Messiah is to be Yahweh, who cannot sin. That means that the passage includes a reference to the immediate son of David, Solomon.

2 Sam. 7:14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it

from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

That this promise applies also to Jesus as the Son of God is shown in Heb. 1:2-5:

Heb. 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

4 ¶ Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

The last statement comes from 2 Samuel, preceeded and connected to it by Psalm 2:7:

Psa. 2:7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Psalm 2 is also referred to in Acts 13.

Acts 13:32 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers,

33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

The day Jesus was begotten here is given as an explanation of Jesus being raised up. How can being begotten explain Jesus being raised from the dead? It cannot refer to something in eternity. And it can't refer to the birth of Jesus.

What was decreed was glad tidings, the gospel, something declared in the Psalm. And there is an implied connection of being begotten with the resurrection. It connects the term Son of God with the resurrection. There is an interrelationship in the terms. The begetting is not a literal generation but a kind of adoption.

And the time indicated by "this day" is clearly related to the future when in asking for the Gentiles to be his inheritance He waits on God to "make his enemies his footstool" so that He can come to have victory and rule over the whole earth. It is not a decree about what took place in eternity past.

Verse 8 in Psalm 2 refers to the same thing as in Psalm 110:1 when Christ was to be raised to sit at the right hand of God the Father, cited by the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:29-36). Again it refers to the resurrection and exaltation of Christ Jesus.

Acts 2:29 Men [and] brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God

hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Psa. 110:1 «A Psalm of David.» The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

"Lord" here is Adown. This has reference to the resurrected Christ, who is exalted. Psalm 110:1 has been shown to refer to Jesus being exalted at the resurrection. He is Lord (Adown, ruler) in the sense of inauguration to a position of authority though it is clear that He does not yet take that position in actuality.

The same new position by the resurrection is seen elsewhere in the New Testament. It is seen in Rom. 1;1-4 and Phil. 2:7-8:

Rom. 1:1 ¶ Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called [to be] an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)

3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

4 And declared [to be] the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

Again the declaration to be Son of God is seen to be a new position of power through his resurrection. And in Philippians He is given a new name to indicate that position because of the redemption that He accomplished by his death on the cross.

Phil 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth;

11 And [that] every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Notice that the name is not given to declare Him to be savior, Jesus, nor that He is Yahweh, but that every knee should bow in recognition of his power and authority. This is the reason why the name above every name is Lord in the sense of Adown, lordship in the sense of absolute power and authority. Every tongue will confess Him as Lord in that sense.

All this takes us back to the promise to David which Heb. 1;2-3 shows applies to Jesus as expressed in Psalm 2. It is the fulfillment in Jesus coming to full sonship in his exaltation.

It is to be noted that all the passages that indicate Jesus is Son of God in a sense more than being Messiah are postresurrection, Jesus as a full son in his exalted state. In his person He was the promised Messiah at birth, but by the resurrection He entered a new exalted state.

Remember that in Heb. 1:4 inheritance was mentioned. It was received by becoming a Son at the resurrection through what He accomplished by his perfect life as indicated in the passages cited. The importance of this is that Jesus is declared in Scripture in two ways, by birth as Son of God by the Holy Spirit through the virgin Mary as Yahweh incarnate, and Son of God by adoption to full sonship in exaltation by the resurrection. In all of this Yahweh incarnate is a Person of the economic Trinity as Son of God with full sonship, not the ontological Trinity.

****The begotten Son of God***

The addition of begottenness to the term Son of God indicates a special relation to God the Father in the economic Trinity but does not necessarily indicate anything

about the ontological Trinity.

First born

The word firstborn is Greek prototokos, which can mean the first to be born to a mother, as shown by Matt. 1:25 and Luke 2:7

:

Matt. 1:25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

Luke 2:7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

But firstborn also has the meaning to be foremost or supreme apart from coming into existence;

Rom. 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

Col. 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Heb. 1:6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

Heb. 12:23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

Rev. 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

So the firstborn with reference to Jesus does not refer to birth or generation.

We have used term adoption has been used to refer to a new relation of Christ Jesus to God in the resurrection. He is said to be begotten (Psa. 2/Acts 2) when raised from the dead. But this indicates a new position. He has a new position of supremacy (the name above every name) when raised from the dead. Here He is the firstborn from the dead.

Only begotten

What makes Jesus unique as a son of God is his being referred to often as the only begotten, which occurs 9 times in the New Testament.

The term only begotten (translated various ways) is used of others besides Jesus:

Luke 7:12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

Luke 8:42 For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him.

Luke 9:38 And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child .

Heb. 11:17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

Where it does not refer directly to Jesus it usually refers to having a single offspring. But this is not necessarily so. In the case of Abraham, there was also Ishmael through Hagar. Isaac was not Abraham's only son begotten by him. Only begotten as a term refers to a unique relationship, it does not merely refer to physical descent. Isaac was a unique son of Abraham. Only begotten (monogenēs) identifies a unique entity, from mono, single, and genos

(from ginomai), kind.

Only five passages relate the term only begotten to Jesus:

(1) John 1:14

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Seeing Jesus glorified occurred at the Transfiguration where Jesus was declared to be the beloved Son and only begotten Son, as below in v 18: Matt. 17:5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. Mark 9:7 And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

(2) John 1:18

John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

Here John explains that in what Jesus, the only begotten, has declared reveals the invisible God. This is a declaration that He is continually in the heart and mind of God the Father. It also is the same as the stamp of approval of God the Father, which the Father placed on Him at his baptism as his beloved Son and that He is to be listened to (Matt. 3:16-17; Mark 1:9-11): Matt. 3:16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Mark 1:9 ¶ And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.10 And

straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: 11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

In neither Jesus' transfiguration nor baptism is there any suggestion that God made Jesus his Son by adoption, but rather that Jesus was declared to have a special place in the heart of God for Him, putting his full stamp of approval on Him in an outward visible manifestation. What is expressed is God the Word (John 1:1) through whom the worlds were created becoming incarnate in human flesh. In this passage being Son is tied to the incarnation. It is the Word in human flesh that is identified as the only begotten Son.

(3) John 3:18

John 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

(4) John 3:16

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life

(5) 1John 4:9

1John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

In the above two passages there is the love of God the Father as a distinct Person for the world in the economy of redemption giving up and sending his beloved Son for the salvation of believers. In this the Father has a position in which He can give or send Him. But we know that it was not a position of dominance because Scripture declares that Jesus having the very form of God (Phil. 2:6) chose to humble Himself to come as a man in the form of a slave to

his Father. His submission was by choice, not based on dominance in a father-son relationship. This indicates that the father-son relationship was not inherent but the result of choices of the Persons of the ontological Trinity before creation. These passages are expressing the great love of God. It could just as well be said of the preincarnate Word. What this means is that within the Trinity prior to dominance implied in a father-son relationship roles of fatherhood and sonship were determined within the counsel of God with regard to the economy of God in creation and redemption before there were any such roles. The ontological Persons, the divine hypostases, took on fatherhood and sonship before creation. This explains how there could be a father to send and give up a son, And it explains how there could be one who by voluntary choice could humble Himself without being a submissive son before He took on that role.

On the basis of what is said about Jesus as the Son of God previously, sonship was by miraculous birth by the Holy Spirit in the virgin Mary or by adoption to full sonship through exaltation in resurrection. These are definitely asserted by direct implication from Scripture. Nothing in Scripture indicates a third sense in which Jesus is a son, except what might be derived from these passages.

Regardless of how this is understood, everything in Scripture relates to the economy of creation and redemption determined by the Triune God in the planning for it within the counsel of God.

It has been shown that the sonship of Jesus can refer to Him having a unique relationship to God in the same sense that Adam, being created perfect without sin, had a relationship to God as a son of God, bearing the image of God. But the passages above indicate something more. Jesus is one who God the Father gave up out of love to human beings so that they might not perish but have

everlasting life. Taken together they indicate something in God's planning before creation and redemption. What He calls his Son existed before creation. And that means that the Son was not sent in the sense of the prophets being sent into the world. It is important to see that this conclusion comes to us in connection with what has been deduced and not from the mere phrase "sent into," which in itself does not indicate its meaning of Jesus being sent from a preexisting state. But here it does indicate this. Jesus "came down" from heaven.

****Jesus in his preexistent person***

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Jesus in the preincarnate state as the Word was involved in creation. But here the term used is Word rather than Son. It refers to Jesus in his person rather than his role as Son in the economy of God.

1Cor. 8:6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

Here too Jesus is referred to in his person (Lord Jesus Christ) rather than using the term Son.

Eph. 3:9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

Again creation is worked referring to Jesus in his person rather than his role as Son.

Heb. 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every

man,

10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

The antecedant in these is not the term Son but Jesus (He 2:9). This too is a reference to his person rather than a designation of Him as Son in his preexistence.

The passages in Colossians and Heb. 1:2 can be the same but are stated referring to the person of Jesus as son.

Col. 1:12 ¶ Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated [us] into the kingdom of his dear Son:

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, [even] the forgiveness of sins:

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether [they be] thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

The term Son in the passage refers to the person of Jesus as Yahweh in his economic role. It does not necessarily indicate something about preincarnate sonship.

Heb. 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

This is another case.

*** *God being "All in all"***

There is honor and a superiority God the Father due to his

being God, his Godhood. God the Father in relation to the Jesus as incarnate Yahweh has greater honor due to his Godhood. This has been seen above in connection with the meaning of Godhood as a position referring to power and authority, rather than something ontological. It is the very explanation for how the word God generally refers to God the Father.

In the future, during the viceregency of Christ, not all three of the Trinity will be equally active in position as God.

1Cor. 15:28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all

Here the Father has the elevated position of honor. This relates to the future, not the past. God the Father sets aside his active position of Godhood for the period of Christ's future reign on earth and then receives it back, and Christ who was equal with the Father originally but became subordinate in the incarnation but is elevated takes this subordinate position again. His incarnation with all it signifies is permanent. All of this is in relation to the economy of creation and redemption in time, and not the ontological Trinity.

**** Actions of the divine economy by the Father and Jesus within creation***

Coming into the world indicates something taking place within the creation.

The phrase into the world does not necessarily indicate preexistence or taking place before creation. The prophets of the Old Testament were said to be sent by God into the world. The following is an example:

John 6:14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come

into the world.

John 17:18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

Since being sent applies to disciples it does not imply preexistence.

Coming down from heaven refers to something occurring within the creation.

So it does indicate preexistence or something taking place before creation. There are many passages stating that Jesus came down from heaven. Of course, coming down from heaven refers to what takes place in the economy of creation and redemption.

Coming forth from the Father

Coming forth from the Father and coming into the world are referred to together, which indicates something within the economy of creation and redemption

***6* Jesus' Nonuse of Divine Capabilities**

It is a fact that in his state of humiliation the incarnate divine being was able to not use his divine capabilities without any change in his divine nature. This has implications for understanding the divine attributes.

1. Jesus in his life on earth as a matter of fact is continually presented as not using his divine capabilities

(1) When Jesus was growing up on earth He did not use divine omniscience, but grew in wisdom.

Luke 2:52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

(2) At one point during his ministry He declared that He did not know the time of his return to earth, so it wasn't just at a young age that He did not have divine knowledge:

Matt. 24:30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

32 ¶ Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

And:

Mark 13:27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

28 ¶ Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:

29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.

30 Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.

31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

32 But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

(3) Even during his ministry Jesus directly implied that a

miracle done through Him was done through the Holy Spirit rather than by divine power exercised by Himself.

When accused of casting out demons by the prince of demons, Jesus did not say that it was by his own power, but implied that the accusation was an attack on the Holy Spirit. [Here we are borrowing from "Christ's Humanity - A Thing to be Grasped."] This is reported in Matt. 12:14-37, Mark 3:22-30, and Luke 11:14-23. This gives us what Jesus says about blaspheming of the Holy Spirit and the unpardonable sin. We will give just Matt. 12:24-31

Matt. 12:24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

25 And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:

26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?

27 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges.

28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

29 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

30 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

In all three passages Jesus had just cast out a demon from a man who was blind and dumb and was then accused by the Pharisee's of working in the power of Beelzebub, Satan. Jesus replied to them (Luke 11:20): "But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." He says here directly that it was by the

finger of God. Being Yahweh Himself, it might be suppose that in saying this He was referring to his own power. But we see from what follows that this is incorrect. He went on to imply that their accusation was a direct blasphemy not of Himself but the Holy Spirit. He was giving credit to the Holy Spirit for casting out the demon. They accused Him of working in the power of Satan when in fact He was working in the power of the Holy Spirit, and that is what made it a blasphemy that would not be forgiven them. There is no mistaking the source of power for the miracles of healing and casting out demons. Jesus Himself was taking the initiative in the action of the demon being cast out but the actual power was that of God through the action of the Holy Spirit.

2. Implications of ontology for Jesus' not using his divine attributes

Putting together what is known from Christology about the ontology of Jesus, incarnate Yahweh, along with the fact that during his life Jesus is known to have not used his divine capabilities in the specific case of casting out demons, there are implications that must be followed out.

(1) In Jesus it wasn't his human nature that did not use the divine attributes but a person, a hypostasis. A nature is not an acting subject. It does nothing itself but operates according to the person to which the nature is united.

(2) The person who did not use the divine attributes was deity. Jesus when on earth was deity, God in the flesh, and not a man. As a person He was the divine hypostasis, one of the Trinity, not a human hypostasis. In Christ Jesus there was only one hypostasis, one of the three divine hypostases.

(3) It is incoherent to say that the same person both uses his capabilities and does not use them with regard to the same things. Could there be synergy? Could there be the hypostasis using two distinct natures at once without

intermixture, both involved in the same action that takes place? This is impossible in the case in which Jesus denied doing miracles but them being done by the Holy Spirit.

So that is a very clear example in which there was no synergy. There was only the divine action of the Holy Spirit when Jesus was acting with his human capabilities. To posit synergy is speculative and in opposition with this revelation.

3. The necessity to give a coherent explanation for the nonuse of the divine capabilities in Christ Jesus

The problem that arises in most theological literature is a contradiction between the attributes of God and the nonuse of divine capabilities on the part of the divine hypostasis of Jesus when alive on earth. It was Jesus as Yahweh who was not using divine capabilities. To repeat, it was not the divine nature that was not using divine capabilities, but a hypostasis, a person, the divine person, Jesus.

But what is viewed is a conflict between divine capabilities of the divine nature and the human capabilities of the human nature. What is taking place is a failure to correctly define the divine capabilities. There must be different definitions of attributes compared to standard definitions, such as for omniscience simpliciter, that God inherently has absolutely all knowledge in his mind at all times. And the different definitions must be on the side of understanding the divine attributes. There is no problem with human knowledge being incomplete, for example.

4. Implications for Divine Attributes

The conflict between divine and human attributes is greatest with the "omni-attributes": omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience. The problem can be traced to the so-called omni-nature of the attributes, specifically

what are called the attributes "simpliciter." The concept of an attribute being simpliciter is that it simply exists as something that is simple or fixed so that it is simply in operation without any qualification. But this is fundamentally wrong. There is no such thing as a nature simply in operation. It is a person, the hypostasis, that acts for a capability to be in operation.

*Omnipotence

Omnipotence simpliciter is impossible in the nature of the case. It is a fact that in the world God does not use all his power all the time, but is able to not use his capability of exerting power according to his own choice of whether He wishes to use it or not. Omnipotence has to mean capability to act with absolute power at the divine will, not apart from it.

*Omnipresence

If omnipotence simpliciter is impossible, omnipresence simpliciter is brought into question. Omnipresence should be understood in the same way to be the capability to be anywhere in God's creation that God as the divine being chooses, not apart from the divine will. We can see the sense of what is meant by God in relation to his presence in Scripture.

Expressions in Scripture with regard to God seeing are seen to refer to a combination of God's power and God's knowledge:

Jer. 23:24 Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD.

God does not literally "fill" heavens and earth because He transcends his creation. The context is about God being able to see everything.

Prov. 15:3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

Again it is not presence as such but knowing what is going on. The same is true in the following passages:

Job 34:21 For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.

Psa. 139:3 Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.

4 For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.

Psa. 139:7 Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

What this means is that there is no place where a person is beyond the knowledge and reach of God.

1 Kings 8:27 But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?

This also states the transcendence of God rather than omnipresence. God is beyond the time and space of the created universe.

Acts 17:24-27:

Acts 17:24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

This again refers to God's transcendence. Transcendence is something different from presence.

In addition to passages that relate to God's universal knowledge and ability to act everywhere, and His transcendence there are passages that relate to God being present with his own people. It is spiritual presence, not omnipresence.

*Omniscience

Omnipresence is seen to be largely God's capability of knowing what is going on in various places in the universe and acting in relation to it. Divine knowledge itself is infinitely comprehensive. God has within his knowledge everything everywhere past present and future which He can bring to mind at will. His knowledge is not restricted by time. He knows the end from the beginning:

Isa. 46:10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

But omniscience is completely understandable when not defined as omniscience simpliciter. Omniscience simpliciter should be rejected as defining omniscience in an invalid arbitrary way. Omniscience should be defined as the capability of the divine being to bring to mind whatever He chooses according to his own will, not that He has to have everything in mind at once and at all times.

*Implications

First, No difficulty results for Christology by understanding the "omni-attributes" defined in the above manner. By understanding the omniscience of God as the capability of God to bring to mind whatever He voluntarily chooses, the lack of knowledge on the part of Christ Jesus is completely consistent with him as God incarnate not choosing to exercise the capability of bringing to mind what is in the divine knowledge but living with only the

knowledge of his human nature in mind. Second, Divine sovereignty and choice clearly resolves the conflicts that arise with improper definitions of the "omni-attributes."

*Other Attributes

As with the omni-attributes, other divine attributes tend to be hypostatized into entities in traditional theology.

*Love simpliciter.

What may be said about omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience may be said about love. It is not love simpliciter, that love is of the essence of God. This would come from taking the statement God is Love to indicate that love and God are to be equated. If God's essence were love simpliciter that would mean that in his inherent being God would necessarily love all his creatures without exception, and therefore that He would necessarily provide for their redemption and act to save all of them without exception. It would require universalism, even of Satan and demons. This means that stating that the essence of God is love contradicts Scripture and is wrong. This is the wrong way to understand a passage, such as 1John 4:16:

1John 4:16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

Consider what God says that he judges but also is merciful to many.

Exod. 34:7 Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

Here when God says He will by no means clear the guilty it is clear that though He is merciful the love implied is not

universal, otherwise He could not say that He will by no means clear the guilty. Scripture does not say God is holiness, but God is holy. But one could just as much expect it to say God is holiness. A nominal predicate such as love in God is love is not essentially different from God is loving, any more than God is holiness would indicate anything essentially different from God is holy.

God is Light

1John 1:5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

Cf John 1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 ¶ And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

Light is what illuminates what is beautiful and good so that it is manifested, including truth. Darkness is the opposite, which is evil and causes truth to be hidden or corrupted. This is apparent throughout Scripture.

When Scripture says God is light it does not mean that God in his very being is manifested because that would require a world inherently existing along with the divine being for the attribute to be manifested to or in it. So again an attribute of God is not simpliciter, simply existing without qualification within the divine being.

*** Correct definitions for understanding divine ontology**

It should be noted that correct definitions stem from understanding correct Christology. Jesus in fact was Yahweh but has been shown in Scripture to be a single divine person and hypostasis that in various circumstances did not use the divine capabilities that are ontologically inherent to him being a single divine person and hypostasis. This fact requires the revision of definitions to avoid

contradictions. Thus correct Christology reveals important aspects of the divine being. Christ in his ontology reveals the true and ultimate ontology of God.

***7* Conclusion**

An examination of Scripture relating to the fatherhood of God the Father and the sonship of Jesus the Son of God indicates a relationship between the persons established in the plan or economy of God in the counsel of God before creation, but this still relates only to the economic Trinity. The persons who are absolutely equal ontologically in the ontological Trinity take roles of superiority and submission implied by fatherhood and sonship. The fallout from this is that there had to be voluntary choices made by the divine persons in the eternal counsel of God, which means that the designations of Father, Son, and Spirit are titles for the positions in the economy of God which were chosen in eternity in the counsel of God, rather than identifying names of the persons in the divine being. Christ's deity is revealed by Him being identified as Yahweh while being presented in God's economy as the man Christ Jesus, who comes in humility to be savior but then exalted further in the economy as the coming world wide ruler, God in the flesh. For humiliation and exaltation to make logical sense the divine attributes must be understood in such a way that the deity of Christ is consistent with both his divine nature and his human nature, and being a single divine person, one hypostasis, as directly stated clearly in the declaration of the council of Chalcedon. The implications that follow from Scripture as a result of this give the ultimate revelation of God in Christ Jesus.

****CHAPTER 6** RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTING VIEWS**

Alternative views from what has been expounded in this book lead to impossible contradictions which finally have to be justified as "divine mysteries," or else compounded with speculative explanations, which are in fact just excuses for bad theology. Here the attempt is made to resolve the issues without contradictions.

***1* Resolution of the Mysteries of Scripture**

Rather than leaving what Scripture teaches as facts that seem inconsistent as mysteries without explanation, the facts have been explained in previous chapters using carefully defined ontological terms that are required to clarify the facts. The result is that each mystery can be understood in a completely coherent and logical manner.

Each mystery has been explained: the mystery of the incarnation; the mystery of distinct persons in one divine being; the mystery of the divine persons being identified as the same; the mystery of Jesus being Yahweh yet God the Father being the only true God; and the mystery of God being both invisible and visible.

1. The Mystery of the Incarnation.

The fact that from the gospel Christians know that only God can save them and the fact that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world to die for their sins in order to save them means that Jesus Christ has to be God in the

flesh. But apart from a consistent logical explanation that is a complete mystery, how God can send God into the world as God in the flesh. The explanation is that there are two aspects of being, the person called hypostasis and the system of capabilities that carry out acts and receive experiences called nature. In the divine being there are three hypostases and one divine nature, and one of the three without any change in his divine being took on a human nature. This made it possible for the incarnate God, Jesus, in the deity of his hypostasis or divine person to be able to act and experience events through the operation and functioning of the human nature.

2. The Mystery of Distinct Persons in One Divine Being

The Old Testament confession repeated by Jesus is very clear that the LORD God is a single LORD (Yahweh, Jehovah). So in the biblical record there is a mystery of three that are distinct from one another but numerically one Yahweh God. The explanation is that the hypostases as three aspects of being come together as one divine being by there being only one single divine nature in which each of the three can act. Since there is only a single divine nature for the three, there is only one divine being, one God.

3. The Mystery of The Divine Persons Identified as the Same

Both God the Father and Jesus are identified as Yahweh. So the first thought is that the Father and Jesus are to be identified with each other. However, it is also a fact that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are distinct from each other. So here is a mystery, how they both can be the LORD (Yahweh, Jehovah), yet distinct. The explanation is that primary existence lies in each of the three hypostases of the one divine being so it is proper to identify any one of the three as the one single divine being, Yahweh. Each hypostasis is self-existent and distinct from the others, yet

there is only one divine being because the existence of one single divine nature lies in the three hypostases.

4. The Mystery of Jesus Being Yahweh yet God the Father Being the Only True God

Jesus is identified as Yahweh and identified as the divine being. So how can Jesus when praying to God the Father say that the Father is the only true God? Apart from a clear explanation that is a mystery. The explanation is that the term God is not an ontological designation for a kind of being but a title for a position of sovereignty. In Jesus' state of humiliation in the incarnation, only God the Father has the position of sovereignty with Jesus being completely subservient, spoken of as having the form of a slave, though ontologically Yahweh. The position of subservience is not ontological and inherent to the Son and the Spirit, and before the economy of creation and redemption was planned in the counsel of God the three were equal. Only when the term clearly refers to God in his very being does the term God have an ontological sense.

5. The Mystery of God Being Both Invisible and Visible.

It is a mystery how Scripture can declare that Yahweh God is invisible, but Yahweh is seen visibly in the Old Testament record. The explanation is that in the economy of creation and redemption the Son and the Spirit voluntarily took on different positions and functions according to the divine counsel before the foundation of the world. In this economy of creation and redemption, God as Father is properly declared to be God and invisible; God as the Son can properly be seen and yet properly identified as Yahweh God.

Each of the five mysteries outlined above is completely explainable without calling on something that remains

unexplained as a mystery. The explanations that resolve the mysteries also provide consistency in response to alternate views that have been propounded.

***2* Resolution of Conflicts with Alternate Views**

This book was not written to deal with all the views of either the theology of Christians historically nor all of the substance of modern evangelical theology in various views that have been held, including many very significant doctrinal positions. It has been written as a positive position statement regarding Christ's deity. Consequently there has been essentially no documentation to particular literature by modern authors regarding the content. And where there are particular quotes the book has left it up to readers to get the original source through a simple internet search. It is therefore not the purpose in this chapter to discuss or document details of other views but only discuss the main legitimate concerns that come up in contrary views and problems with them. However, those readers who are familiar the literature should be able to recognize that there has been implicit interaction with much of it.

The following contrary views will be treated: (1) primacy of the divine nature over hypostases; (2) derivation of the hypostasis of Christ Jesus; (3) Monothelitism and trithelitism; (4) inseparability of divine actions; (5) divine Simplicity; (6) the Economic Trinity made the Ontological Trinity; (7) eternal generation of God the Son; (8) ontological hierarchy in the Trinity; (9) Extra-Catholicum; (10) permission for Jesus to exercise divine powers. In all replies the absolute deity of Christ in his person is maintained.

1. Primacy of the Divine Nature over Hypostases

Legitimate Concern: Primacy of three hypostases seems to imply tritheism. But Scripture explicitly states that Yahweh God is one, and so not three.

Problem: There is a unity and singularity of the divine being which seems to be contradicted by the primacy of three hypostacies. Therefore it seems that the unity must be found in the primacy of the divine nature rather than the three hypostases, the three Persons of the Trinity. But primacy of nature would imply that Jesus in the incarnation would be a composite of two beings, divine and human because He has two natures.

Resolution: There is in fact only a singular divine nature for the three hypostases in the single divine being. This makes both a social trinity and tritheism impossible. But the existence of the divine being lies in the three hypostases rather than the divine nature that exists in them. The reason for this is that the existence of a being cannot lie in its nature, since the existence of Jesus did not lie in his two natures but his hypostasis. There is no other alternative to existence being in nature than it being in hypostasis. Being consists only of the aspects of being, hypostasis and nature. Moreover Jesus is identified in his hypostasis as Yahweh which indicates He is self-existent in his hypostasis as the one true divine being. This also shows that existence lies in hypostasis and does not lie in the divine nature, which is a different and distinct aspect of the divine being. This is most significant. A number of other different traditional theological points relate to this issue.

2. Derivation of the Hypostasis of Christ Jesus

Legitimate Concern: Jesus' nature on the divine side was not created but of the same substance as that of God the Father. So it has been supposed that if Jesus on the divine

side were derived and have his source in the Person of God the Father it would prove that He was of the same substance as the Father rather than that He was created. That is because what is generated by analogy to human generation has the same substance or kind of nature as the parent and so cannot be a creation.

Problem: Derivation of the hypostasis of Jesus implies that He is not equally ultimate with God the Father and so not Yahweh who is self-existent. The idea that Jesus is consubstantial because of generation had its origin in misunderstanding Scripture concerning the sonship of Jesus, that sonship indicated derivation.

Resolution: Jesus is to be identified with Yahweh and so He must be self-existent in Himself and directly known to be deity without there being any source for his hypostasis and Person. Derivation is directly contradictory to Jesus being inherently self-existent and his primary existence lying in hypostasis, as shown to be necessary above. As indicated before it is highly likely that failure to see Jesus having the same substance as God the Father directly was due to ignorance on the part of the church, when opposing Arianism, of the direct identification of Jesus to be Yahweh through New Testament citation of the Old Testament. It seems they did not go back to the Hebrew Bible, but relied entirely on the translation into Greek. The ambiguity of the translation did not make it clear that Jesus was being identified as Yahweh. Once this was indelibly fixed in the Creed of the church it could not be removed, and wasn't even in the Reformation churches.

3. Monothelism and Trithelism

Legitimate concern: The hypostasis and Person of Jesus must be preserved as an inherently active divine subject. As a result it has been supposed that the will of Christ Jesus lies in his hypostasis or Person. Trithelism relates to the

Trinity, that will lies in the divine hypostases.

Problem: As it was stated before:

Monothelitism places the will in the hypostasis of Christ Jesus rather than in his natures. The result is that Jesus doesn't have a human nature with a human will. The will must be only a divine will since the hypostasis is the same before the incarnation and in the incarnation. That contradicts Jesus who distinguished his will from that of the will of God the Father. But Jesus' will when He distinguished it from the will of the Father must be a human will, which if in the hypostasis would make his hypostasis a human one, which is impossible.

Moreover, if will were in one of the hypostases of the Trinity there would have to be three divine wills corresponding to the three Persons, since then will would belong to hypostasis. This is trithelitism. It has been stated this way: "God is an immaterial substance or soul endowed with three sets of cognitive faculties each of which is sufficient for personhood, so that God has three centers of self-consciousness, intentionality, and will." In this view a distinct will lies in each of the divine hypostases. This is like monothelitism in Christology in which the will lies in the divine hypostasis of Christ. But this is a necessary correlate of Christ Jesus having only a divine will because with three wills in the divine being, the will of the Son would be different from that of the Father because in a different hypostasis, so there would not be a contradiction if his will were different from the Father's. A crude picture is given in the mythical dog Cerberus. There is one body representing the nature, and three heads representing the hypostases and the three wills. The obvious criticism is that the will is part of the soul, as was stated above, so of Christ's will is only a divine will of his divine hypostasis, Jesus would not have a human soul; He would not be a true human with both soul and body. That is because a divine

soul would be too different from a human one. But Jesus must be truly human, and have a true human soul to be human, in order to be the Savior of human beings from sin.

Resolution: An active divine subject acts in specific individual divine acts through operation of the single divine nature, but the God-man Jesus as a divine personal subject also can act through the operation of his single human nature. So in Jesus there is one Person or hypostasis to whom a particular act belongs, but the act itself is either through the operation of the divine nature with the divine capability of will or through operation of his human nature with a human capability of will. The operation of will lies in a nature though it belongs to a hypostasis.

4. Inseparability of Divine Operations

Legitimate concern: The unity of the single divine being must be preserved though each Person of the Trinity is portrayed as acting separately, so it is supposed that in all of the acts of the persons of the Trinity all three persons of the Trinity are at work.

Problem: With the divine hypostases or persons acting inseparably they are not recognized as active personal ontological subjects as portrayed in Scripture. Augustine stated inseparability incorrectly, that in all of the activities of the persons of the Trinity all three persons of the Trinity are at work; they “are pronounced separately but act inseparably.” “You have the differentiation of the persons and the inseparability of their activity.”

Resolution: The individual actions take place on the part of the distinct personal hypostases but the actual operations involved in individual actions take place in the single divine nature. The individual divine actions work together

in harmony not because they are inseparable in themselves but exist in harmony because the operations are together in a single nature within one single divine being. So there is an inseparability of operations, but not an inseparability of the acts of the distinct hypostases, which as acts are distinct to the hypostases.

5. Divine Simplicity

Legitimate Concern: The divine being is not composed of "parts." God is not portrayed like a human person with body parts, like pagan deities. But another concern is philosophical, that God is also not dependent for his existence on anything metaphysically above Himself. "God cannot be composed of elements that are more ultimate in a logical or metaphysical sense than He Himself is."

Problem: Simplicity as stated in traditional theology as stated above the attributes have hypostatic character so that they are "parts" and so must be treated as single entities or parts. This seems to have a basis only in speculative philosophy. It fits in with Neo-Platonism that elevated universals to the highest level of reality, and it seems this influenced Augustine in what he said, who dominated much thinking about God and the Trinity in the western world. Again it wrongly places primacy of existence in nature of a being rather than hypostasis.

Resolution: What are called the attributes of God exist within the single divine nature. They are mental descriptions of the single divine nature, and they are described only through analogies with human attributes in beings that are created in the image of God, so they are not "parts" of God. And they are not something metaphysical that is determinative of God's being. The divine nature has its existence only in each of the three three hypostases of God which also are not parts of the divine

being but rather aspects of being in which the existence of the divine nature lies. So God's existence does not depend on any properties. And the entire divine being exists in the aspects of divine hypostasis and the single divine nature that exists because of it. And because an entire being exists when there are aspects of both hypostasis and nature, the existence of one hypostasis implies the existence of the entire divine being.

6. The Economic Trinity made into the Ontological Trinity

Legitimate concern: There cannot logically be an economic Trinity without it being grounded in the ontological Trinity. God does not have a will that can contradict attributes of his nature. Yet these attributes are not detyermnative of God's being.

Problem: There is no biblical way to ground the ontological Trinity in the economic Trinity, so doing so is purely speculative and therefore invalid. It also expresses the will of God in such a way as to make what God does as necessary as the very existence of God. Thus, all that God does including creation of the world is necessary and inherent to God's being. There is no room for free will in the divine being.

Resolution: The economic Trinity can be grounded in the immanent Trinity as viewed in distinction from both the ontological Trinty and the economic Trinity. In this the roles of fatherhood, sonship, and spirit-precession are chosen by sovereign voluntary choice on the part of the hypostases and members of the ontological Trinity. This is on the basis of what takes place in the counsel of God, rather than what is inherent to the divine being. But because what the hypostases do is through a single divine nature there is harmony within the choices and planning of God.

7. Eternal Generation of the God the Son

Legitimate concern: The fact that fatherhood and sonship of Jesus are implied to have existed prior to creation and redemption seems to indicate that they are inherent to the ontological Trinity. Because alternative concepts of fatherhood and sonship depend on what is in the divine nature, it is supposed that fatherhood and sonship refer to a kind of eternal generation.

Problem: There is nothing to indicate fatherhood and sonship were prior to the divine counsel of God so it must be inherent and necessary to the divine being. Moreover making the relationships exist through a kind of eternal generation results in inherent contradiction with the primacy of hypostasis in the divine being.

Resolution: Scripture implies that the sonship of Jesus preexisted before creation and redemption but it can be understood within the Immanent Trinity in the planning of the divine counsel of God. It is therefore wrong to conclude on the basis of negative reasoning that the fatherhood of God the Father and sonship of Christ is ontologically inherent and logically necessary to the divine being in the Ontological Trinity. By recognizing the primacy and consequent absolute equality of the hypostases, and so their direct implied deity there is no need for inherent fatherhood, sonship, and precession of the Spirit in the divine being.

8. Ontological hierarchy in the Trinity

Legitimate concern: Eternal generation of Christ as God the Son seems to imply an improper ontological subordination of one person of the Trinity to another in a kind of generation analogous to human generation, so an alternative view of fatherhood and sonship is required.

Problem: The alternative that is proposed is eternal functional subordination that makes fatherhood and sonship to be superiority and subordination \inherent to the ontological Trinity. But fatherhood and sonship in that sense are something that wrongly relates them to the divine nature rather than hypostasis or person,.

Resolution: Rather than fatherhood and sonship being inherent, involuntary and necessary to the divine being as in both the eternal generation view and the functional subordination view, fatherhood and sonship should be viewed as sovereign voluntary choices on the part of distinct hypostases in the one divine being. For this to result in a consistent view, the choices of these roles on the part of distinct personal hypostases, have to be antecedent to the completed plan or economy of creation and redemption. Within the planning the Person or hypostasis that takes the role of sonship would voluntarily take the first step of humbling Himself and the one who takes the role of fatherhood would voluntarily accept giving up the first as his son in the economy of creation and redemption.

9. Extra-Catholicum

Legitimate concern: Scripture seems to indicate that even in the incarnation, and even as a baby, Christ Jesus continued to function in the divine nature upholding and maintaining the universe.

Problem: This divides the hypostasis of the Son of God into two distinct personal active subjects and two selves, and since selves are inherently connected with a hypostasis it divides the hypostasis of Christ in two. It makes the God-man a divine hypostasis and a human hypostasis conjoined together essentially no different from the union of God with a separate man, the serious Nestorian error.

Resolution: Passages that seem to indicate continuous

activity have been misunderstood, but rather indicate that by his sovereign will, the word of his power, when Yahweh the Word as the preincarnate Son created the universe He created a mechanism though natural laws by which He would cause the universe to be upheld and function. Being the God-man does not mean that He acts continuously in two distinct personal active selves, with all the functions of both the divine nature and the human nature. The person of God that became incarnate voluntarily and deliberately humbled Himself to take the form of a servant and become entirely dependent on the Father and the Spirit during his period of humiliation without exercise any of the powers of the divine nature. Thus, whatever was done in the visible actions of the Jesus were done actually by the Father and the Spirit exercising the powers of the divine nature.

10. Permission for Jesus to Exercise Divine Powers

Legitimate concern: For Jesus to exercise the divine nature on his own would contradict that He declared that He never ever acted as Messiah on his own initiative.

So to act as Messiah using the divine nature it would have to be by permission.

Problem: There is no explicit statement in Scripture that Jesus exercised the divine nature, but rather that He lived on earth a life completely filled with the Holy Spirit in total dependence on the Father and the Spirit to do divine works. And if Jesus simply used the divine powers Himself on his own, there is nothing for the Spirit to do and there would be no reason for his presence the way Scripture states.

Resolution: The idea that Jesus was given authority to act on his own by the Father is contradictory to his emptying of Himself to fulfill his mission of redemption. It would be saying that God the Father can change the conditions of redemption, that Jesus does not have to live a completely

human life in its entirety, born of a woman under the law, as a substitute for sinful human beings. This explains why Jesus depended completely on the Spirit of God living entirely by faith and not sight.

***3* General Questions and Answers**

Here in a different way is an attempt to give answers questions with regard to the ontology concerning Christ's deity and his position in the Trinity. There is no attempt to avoid complexities of language in doing this. It is on the basis of what has been developed in the preceding chapters and above, so the answers state conclusions using the language already used.

#1.

Q. In brief what are the biblical facts concerning the Trinity and Christology?

A. Scripture reveals that there is one self-existent and immutable God, Yahweh, and that in Yahweh there are three distinct self-existing selves. The selves are distinguished by the titles of the roles they take, Father, Son, also called the Word, and Holy Spirit. One of these three, the Word, became flesh in Jesus. In Scripture the Father is Yahweh, and Jesus also is Yahweh. Malachi 3:6 shows that the divine being is immutable.

#2.

Q. Isn't belief in three distinct selves in one self-existent and immutable God, Yahweh, incoherent and irrational?

A. Apart from a rational explanation concerning the facts, the truth is a mystery. But Christians are to be able to give a rational reason for this truth because the hope that is in

them depends on it. What unifies and make this belief coherent and rational is a single divine nature existing in the three.

#3.

Q. How can there be a rational explanation for the truth of three distinct selves in one self-existent and immutable God?

A. A rational explanation for the truth of three distinct selves in one self-existent and immutable Yahweh God can be derived by deductive logic from Scripture. Distinguishing three distinct selves in one God was done historically in the early church by correctly distinguishing three distinct realities, the hypostases of God, sharing one single divine nature.

#4.

Q. Isn't it also irrational to hold that God came down to earth incarnate in a man?

A. A rational explanation for God having come down to earth in an incarnation can be explained as one of the distinct selves of Yahweh God, one of the hypostases, being joined to a true human nature as well as the shared divine nature. It is revealed in Scripture that God came down in the flesh in Christ Jesus.

#5.

Q. Why isn't all this just a pronouncement of incomprehensible words in the mere appearance of being rational without real deduction of it from Scripture?

A. Words are necessary that go beyond the words and usages of Scripture but must have comprehensible meaning,

which have to be carefully defined and distinguished. These are based on real distinctions and concepts that are in fact in Scripture. The term hypostasis is used to refer that which makes a particular entity real and distinct from other particular entities in its class. The term nature is used to refer to an instance of what it is that is common to a class of entities. The term substance (ousia) is used to refer to the exact collection of abstract elements or attributes that are necessary for an entity to be identified as being within a class of entities. These are general terms that are necessary to describe the ontology of God and Christ Jesus. These are necessary for rational explanation since God and Christ Jesus are real, and this requires that ontological terminology be used to describe things that are ontological. These terms have to be used in a consistent way.

#6.

Q. In what way is the incarnate God consubstantial (homooousios) with both humans beings and God the Father?

A. The incarnate God, Christ Jesus, is consubstantial (homooousios) with humans in the sense that He has the same set of necessary and essential attributes that define someone as being in the class of human beings. It is clear in Scripture that the incarnate God has such attributes. He therefore belongs in the class of human beings, and so is by definition a true man. This is consistent with Scripture that identifies Jesus as a man. The word consubstantial (homooousios) is necessary to give a precise ontological description, without which no ontology can be stated. The incarnate God, being Yahweh must also be consubstantial with God the Father, who also is Yahweh, by the fact that Scripture declares them both as Yahweh to be one God. Being one, they must inherently have the same attributes, which is confirmed by Scripture.

#7.

Q. Why can't substance (ousia) be considered to be what is essential in the sense of what is inherent and necessary to individual being rather than the abstract set of attributes of a being?

A. The term substance (ousia) cannot be considered to be what is essential in the sense of what is inherent and necessary to individual being rather than the abstract set of attributes of a being. The reason is that what is inherent and necessary to a particular individual being applies only to an individual. So if substance (ousia) applies only to an individual that would imply that the whole of humanity must be considered to be a single individual being, which is impossible. To refer to humanity in general a term, substance, has to be used that is not restricted to a single individual. And to be consistent the substance (ousia) has to be the same as the substance (ousia) in the term consubstantial (homooousios).

#8.

Q. How are each of the three, called hypostases, within the One God to be conceived and described? Aren't they just labels for different ways in which the One God acts?

A. The three that take on different roles, called Father, Son and Holy Spirit in Scripture are distinct selves and so are to be conceived as distinct ontological realities called hypostases that are personal principles or personal centers of particular existence underlying God as one complete particular being. They refer to ontological aspects of being, and so are not mere labels for actions. In Scripture because they are identified as Yahweh, the one true God, who is self-existent as the I AM, The hypostases are therefore both distinct and self-existent.

#9.

Q. Why can't the substance (ousia) be considered the center of existence underlying God's one complete being rather than the hypostases?

A. Substance (ousia) cannot be considered the center of existence underlying God's one complete being rather than hypostasis being the center of existence. Consistency requires that the meaning of substance be the same for both God and man since Christ is both consubstantial with God and consubstantial with man. And substance (ousia) refers to what is general and common to human beings as a class of beings and not individuals, rather than what is essential to an individual being. But if substance (ousia) were the center of existence it would require that the center of existence of individual human beings would lie in the abstract attributes that define a class, which is impossible, since center of existence lies in what is particular and concrete. Therefore substance (ousia) can't be used to refer the three particular realities in God either.

#10.

Q. Why cannot the center of existence of God lie in a single instance of the divine substance, a divine nature, rather than the three hypostases?

A. The center of existence in God also cannot be in a single instance of divine substance, a nature, because a nature is defined as an instance of substance and this would make the incarnate Christ have his center of existence in both a human nature as well as the divine nature as a compound existence in which that center of existence changes during the incarnation. That would make the Person (Hypostasis) mutable from being single before the incarnation to compound in the incarnation. This is impossible because the divine being is immutable in both hypostasis, nature,

and substance. Even clearer is the fact that the divine hypostases are identified as Yahweh, which in its very name, signifies existence, self-existence, so that existence lies in the hypostasis.

#11.

Q. Why cannot a hypostasis of a personal being subsist in an individual personal being, rather than the being subsisting in its hypostasis? Is not the hypostasis an aspect of the personal being?

A. Hypostasis also cannot be subsistent in a complete individual being because it would contradict Scripture that declares the Father and Son, two hypostases in the divine being, are both Yahweh and so self-existent in themselves and not subsistent in something else. Therefore the self-existence of the One God lies in the self-existence of the hypostases even though the hypostases are aspects of personal being. For rational consistency the same relationship must be true in individual human beings.

#12.

Q. Why cannot nature be defined as simply a substance (ousia), rather than an instance of substance?

A. Nature also cannot be defined as simply a substance (ousia) rather than an instance of substance. Nature is not an abstract but something particular and concrete that subsists in a hypostasis but is distinct from the hypostasis, otherwise Christ's hypostasis would include his natures themselves (the two sets of attributes that make up the substances or ousiae) and the hypostasis would change from being without the human nature before the incarnation to a compound of natures, divine and human, in the incarnation, in which case there would be change in God in the incarnation which is impossible.

#13.

Q. How can it be that God can exist without change as a true man?

A. The one eternal hypostasis of God who is called the Son took on a nature which is an instance of the substance (ousia) of humanity in addition to continuing in his hypostasis and retaining the divine nature without change. So the two natures came together in one person (prosopon) and one hypostasis. But neither his hypostasis nor his divine nature changed.

#14.

Q. How can what is abstract, the human substance (ousia) unite with what is particular, a hypostasis, for the one called the Son to be a real individual?

A. The human substance (ousia), which is abstract becomes concrete in an individual as an instance of the common abstract substance of humanity in a particular nature. But the two natures in a single hypostasis in Christ have to be particular instances of a substance and not something general and abstract. The natures have to be particular and concrete because a nature pertains to a single particular individual. Yet the nature does not exist as a single thing in itself alone but only in union with what makes something particular and real, the hypostasis. The hypostasis is the aspect of reality and existence in a particular entity, whereas the instance of what is common to the class of entities exists in reality only in the particular entity. The particular nature then is the other aspect of a complete individual being in addition to the hypostasis.

#15.

Q. Doesn't the concept of two natures coming together in

one person and hypostasis make the incarnate God, the Son, Himself to be a compound of two natures or instances of divine and human substances (ousiae)?

A. A hypostasis is not itself merely an instance of a nature. Consistency requires that the hypostases and nature be kept distinct. Three hypostases in one being do not imply three natures. If not distinguished each of the individual hypostases in the One God would consist of a combination of a hypostasis and a divine nature of his own, which would make them three Gods, an incoherent contradiction. But in the same way a single hypostasis does not imply only one nature. And the reverse is true, that two natures do not imply two persons and two hypostases. So in the Son two natures do not imply two persons and hypostases.

#16.

Q. How can it be known that the three in God are not one in the sense of being a harmonious community of three Gods?

A. The three in Yahweh God are not one in the sense of being a harmonious community of three Gods. This is contrary to Scripture. Jesus, in the way He stated the biblical revelation concerning God, explained that the one true God of Israel, the LORD (referring to Yahweh), is one single being. A united harmonious community of three Gods would each have their own distinct individual natures, whereas the unity of God is to be explained as the three hypostases in God sharing a single divine nature in a single being.

#17.

Q. Why cannot the incarnation of God take place by union of the hypostasis of God the Son with a separate distinct hypostasis of a man Jesus?

A. The incarnation took place by the union of the divine nature and a human nature in one person and one hypostasis, not the union of one of the divine hypostases with a separate and distinct human hypostasis. The combination of a divine hypostasis and human hypostasis in one makes it no different from a mere man joined to the Holy Spirit. And the combination would involve a mutation of the divine hypostasis from being uncompound in the preincarnate state to compound in the incarnate state by the union of two particulars. Furthermore then it could not be said that it is God who is in the flesh as Scripture asserts, but a compound of God and man.

#18.

Q. How can it be known that Christ does not have only one nature that is a combination of divine and human attributes?

A. In Christ Jesus there also was not only one nature that was a combination of divine and human attributes. To be redeemer Christ has to be perfect God and perfect man and not a mixture which would make him neither. And again there would be mutation of the divine nature to a mixture in the combined nature.

#19.

Q. How can it be known that the hypostasis of Christ is not a combination of the divine nature in union with a human nature which however remain distinct?

A. The hypostasis of Christ could not be a combination of the divine nature in union with a human nature that remains distinct because there would be an impossible inconsistency in the definition of the term hypostasis, since in the Trinity hypostasis must be distinct from nature, but in the incarnation it would have to be supposed that it consists of natures in combination.

#20.

Q. Why could the incarnation not take place by the Son emptying Himself of nonessential divine attributes so that the contradiction between human and divine attributes is removed?

A. The incarnation could not take place by the Son emptying Himself of supposed nonessential divine attributes so that a contradiction between human and divine attributes is removed. God's attributes consist of what is essential and are revealed to be inherent and fixed to God, including omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience. These cannot be set aside because God is immutable and an emptying of these would imply mutation in God. But these attributes are to be understood consistently with the revealed relation of the hypostasis of God the Son to the divine nature of God.

#21.

Q. How can Christians understand the divine attributes of God as consistent with the life of Jesus as a true man? Aren't divine attributes such as omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence inconsistent with human attributes?

A. Christians are to recognize that the incarnate Christ is the final self-revelation of God, and earlier revelation is to be understood consistent with what is known about his Person and life rather than through philosophical notions. God reveals He is self-existent, immutable, sovereign and not dependent on anything outside Himself. Other attributes are to be consistent with both written revelation and conclusions drawn from understanding the Person of Christ as having two natures in one hypostasis. The attributes are to be explained in terms of the facts concerning this ontology concerning Christ, that there is such a thing as the

nonuse or nonexercise of divine and human attributes in the one divine Person/Hypostasis.

#22.

Q. If a hypostasis in God or man refers to a self, why cannot the incarnate God have a divine soul with a human body but without a human soul, since in Christ it is true that the hypostasis is one of the three hypostases of God?

A. Jesus had both a human soul as well as a human body. Without a human soul the incarnate God in Christ would not accomplish redemption which requires Him to be a complete perfect man as well as complete and perfect God. Without a human soul he would not be a complete man.

#23.

Q. Why cannot the soul in Christ be both divine and human and so satisfy the requirement that He have both a divine and a human soul?

A. The soul in Christ Jesus cannot be explained as a single soul that is both divine and human. There is a qualitative difference between the attributes as properties in the divine soul and in the human soul so that in capability and operation the soul in the divine nature and the soul in the human nature have to be distinct.

#24.

Q. Why can there not be just one capability of will that resides in the Person/Hypostasis of the incarnate God rather than two residing in his two natures?

A. In Christ Jesus there was not just one capability of will that resides in his hypostasis. There is inherently a different divine capability of will compared to the human capability

of will. The will is a complex of capabilities that reside in the nature with an integrity of nature. The capabilities of different natures are not intermixed in their operation. And because of the two natures in the incarnate God there are both divine capabilities of the will and human capabilities that relate to the two natures. But whichever will of whichever nature is in operation it is the will of the single hypostasis. So the choice of which nature to operate within is the choice of the single hypostasis.

#25.

Q. How can it be known that the generation of God the Son relates to the economy of God and not what is ontological?

A. Expressions in Scripture with regard to the generation of the Son are all in the context of the economy of creation and redemption, so they are expressions of divine choices rather than of what is ontological and fixed. There is no deductive basis for extrapolating the generation of the Son into the ontological Trinity. Without such a basis the idea is invalid.

#26.

Q. Isn't belief in the eternal generation of God the Son entirely necessary to the faith, otherwise there would be no grounds for believing that He is consubstantial with God the Father and there would be no foundation for the doctrine of the Trinity?

A. It is totally unnecessary to suppose an extrapolation from biblical statements about generation of the Son to know that the Son is consubstantial with the Father because it is known directly from Scripture that both Jesus and the Father are identified as Yahweh, which necessarily implies they share one nature in one divine being. The church of the 4th century was ignorant of this biblical fact because it

relied entirely on the LXX translation of the Old Testament which obscured the identification and so it argued for the consubstantiality of the Persons of the Trinity through erroneous extrapolation of what the Scripture said about generation and procession of the Son and the Spirit. These are not about ontology but about relations chosen by God for the economy of creation and redemption.

#27.

Q. Doesn't what Scripture teaches about the economy of God necessarily imply what is immanent to God and therefore what is said about the Son of God in time necessarily applies to Him in eternity?

A. What is true about the Son of God within the economy of God in time necessarily applies immanently to Him in eternity only within the counsel of God. And what occurred in the counsel of God was entirely according to the sovereign free will choices of God and not the ontology, which refers to what is inherent and fixed. This means that what is referred to in God's economy does not necessarily imply anything about the ontology of the Persons or Hypostases of God. There are no grounds for that extrapolation.

#28.

Q. Why can't generation and procession be ontological to the being of God and therefore involuntary rather than the result of choices?

A. A distinction must be made between what is ontological and what is immanent, but not strictly economic. What is ontological is what is fixed in the hypostases and nature of God. Choices are not ontological but can be immanent to God yet apart from the actual creation. Generation is immanent within the counsel and plan of God, but has

regard to the economy of creation and redemption, and so economic in that sense. If it were ontological then it would not be in accord with the expression of Scripture in which generation is always in the context of creation and redemption.

#29.

Q. Does generation and procession being immanent but not ontological mean that the terms Father, Son, and Holy Spirit themselves do not refer to something ontological but rather something immanent that relates to the choices in eternity that the three in the Trinity determined before actual creation and redemption in time?

A. The terms Father, Son and Holy Spirit refer to the relations that the three in the Trinity voluntarily take up for themselves in connection with creation and redemption, but may refer to more than that. It is a mistake on the part of the early church and the theology which has followed to make the terms refer to what is ontological in the Trinity. But there are indications that the members of the Trinity took up relations of fatherhood etc. before actual creation and redemption in time.

#30.

Q. How can it be known that there is such a thing as an independent exercise or operation of one or the other of the natures in the incarnate God?

A. The independent exercise or operations of attributes of the divine nature of the Son is known because in the kenosis of Christ He had the ability to set aside the voluntary exercise or use of his divine attributes in order to take the position or form of a slave without the loss or change of his divine hypostasis or divine nature.

#31.

Q. Why can't there be two concurrent consciousnesses in Christ Jesus since consciousness takes place in the nature and there are both a divine nature and a human nature in Christ?

A. If consciousness only relates to a nature, and in God there is only one nature, there could be only one consciousness in God implying only one self-conscious hypostasis and not three. This would contradict Scripture which implies that there are three hypostases in God. It would imply the antitrinitarian heresy of modalism. Therefore there can't be two concurrent consciousnesses in the one Person/Hypostasis of Christ Jesus.

#32.

Q. Isn't nonuse of divine attributes on the part of the incarnate Christ irreconcilable with Chalcedonian Christology since there are both a divine and a human nature in Christ implying both a divine and a human mind, a divine and a human will, and a divine and a human consciousness?

A. Mind, will, and consciousness must be understood in relation to the hypostasis in order to have a Trinity. In Christ there are two natures in which the operation of mind, will and consciousness takes place. Chalcedon teaches that the two natures come together in one prosopon and one hypostasis, which imply a single actor and distinct particular entity, the God-man. John Owen was correct in properly distinguishing individual actings themselves from operations by which they take place by application of the will in the nature to the acts: "The will of God as to the peculiar actings of the Father in this matter is the will of the Father, and the will of God with regard to the peculiar actings of the Son is the will of

the Son; not by a distinction of sundry wills, but by the distinct application of the same will unto its distinct acts in the persons of the Father and the Son." And "As in the person of the Father . . . because this person has the whole divine nature, all the essential properties of that nature are in that person. The wisdom, the understanding of God, the will of God, the immensity of God, is in that person, not as that person, but as the person is God. The like is to be said of the persons of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Hereby each person having the understanding, the will, and power of God, becomes a distinct principle of operation; and yet all their actings ad extra being the actings of God, they are undivided, and are all the works of one, of the self-same God (Trinity)." So there is a distinction between the acts which belong to the hypostases and the operations which belong to the single divine nature.

#33.

Q. Since there is only one divine nature in the Trinity and the mind, will and consciousness resides only in the nature, doesn't it follow that there is only one consciousness in the Trinity rather than three consciousnesses?

A. Because mind, will and consciousness reside in the single divine nature but there are three hypostases that are distinct selves there must be a resolution to the apparent paradox. There must be a stream of consciousness of mind relating to each of the Hypostases that operate in the one divine nature. This is simply a matter of logical consistency. The individual acts of the Hypostases that take place in the divine nature are connected. But because there is a connection of faculties in the one divine nature, the streams of consciousness of mind inherently interact, which gives an explanation of the intuitive Perichoresis that is conceived in Trinitarian theology.

#34.

Q Isn't a 'rational soul' a predicate of nature, not personhood, so that the mind, intelligence, consciousness, and will are properties of natures, not persons? Thus, in Christ because Christ had both a divine nature and a human nature He must have had two minds, intelligences, consciousnesses and wills?

A. This makes Christ have two rational souls and two selves separate and distinct from what is claimed to be a single Person/Hypostasis. Yet biblically what is associated with Person/Hypostasis to make them distinct is a self-conscious self, an "I" as one of the distinctions within the Trinity. This converts the natures into the selves and leaves the persons/hypostases mere abstract place-holders. It contradicts the very idea of distinct particular hypostases in the Trinity as selves.

#35.

Q. Doesn't exercise of only one attribute at a time imply the monophysite heresy of implying that there is only one nature consisting of a divine nature and a human nature distinct but combined in one requiring that only one of the two can be exercised at any time?

A. The divine person of the Son does not subsist in natures, but the natures subsist distinctly and separately but unitedly in the one divine person. Thus, there is no direct union of natures, but only a union of the natures in the hypostasis of Christ Jesus. Christ did have capabilities of mind, consciousness and will that operated in the two natures, but it was the divine person, distinct from the other divine persons of the Trinity, that acted using these capabilities of nature. It was not the nature as such acting, but the person acting through and in the nature. And because it was a single hypostasis acting, the actions distinct to the person or

hypostasis were acting in one or the other of the natures and attributed to Christ's one divine hypostasis.

#36.

Q. Doesn't independent exercise of capabilities of one or the other natures in the incarnate God contradict the inseparability of actions and exercise of capabilities in Christ Jesus?

A. A separability of actions and exercise of capabilities on the part of the single divine hypostasis of Christ has to be true of the other hypostases in God, and therefore a separability of actions and exercise of capabilities on the part of the hypostases of the Father and the Spirit. Yet this does not imply there is no inseparability of operations because all operations take place within the single divine nature of God, though there is therefore an inseparability of the operations themselves by being in the one divine nature.

#37.

Q. Could not the divine nature and the human nature be exercised or used together concurrently, while remaining independent and without mixture?

A. In Christ's state of humiliation Scripture states that there was a kenosis in which God the Son voluntarily set aside the exercise or use of his divine powers, and at the same time there are no clear statements of Him ever using divine powers during his state of humiliation. If in Christ's state of humiliation He continued to exercise his divine capabilities and powers along with his human capabilities it would contradict the kenosis that He as a single divine hypostasis took the form of a slave while remaining a single divine hypostasis as He emptied Himself. In his exaltation there is only the restriction of the position of Christ being Son of the Father, as is stated clearly in Scripture, since the Father

only has the position as God though the Son remains God ontologically and has been given the power and authority of the God under the Father.

#38.

Q. Why couldn't the person we now call Jesus Christ be able to live on two levels at the same time, since He was both divine and human? Wouldn't He necessarily continue to live on the divine level as he had done from all eternity, unbounded by time, yet in the incarnation also live on a human level at the same time?

A. This asserts two distinct and separate selves, essentially distinct and separate. It is simple pure Nestorianism. Then it is not one Person or Hypostasis, Yahweh, Jesus who lives an incarnate life in subjection in the form of a slave, but two in the two natures, each nature living a life of its own. And the nature that supposedly lives on the divine level is not the nature of the incarnate God alone but the divine nature of the one single divine entire being, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, since there is only one divine nature in God. And that would mean that it cannot be the divine nature that is living on a separate level but imply the entire Trinity, which is impossible because it would confound the Persons (Hypostases). Rather it must be one person or hypostasis that lives as a single person in Jesus, not the Father and Spirit. To say that it is the single divine nature of the Trinity that lives on the separate level in Christ Jesus makes it Dynamic Modalism as well, two heresies in one.

#39.

Q. Aren't there biblical statements that necessarily imply though not explicitly stating the independent exercise or use of the divine nature during his state of humiliation?

A. It is supposed that Scripture implies that there was an

independent exercise or use of the divine nature in the incarnate God during his state of humiliation. Passages that are interpreted as an ongoing action of the divine hypostasis and operation of the divine nature ignore the action and operation through created means by which the creation can work through a mechanism, such as conceived in the laws of science. In particular, Christ upholding the world by the word of his power can be understood as his power in operation in the laws of nature that He Himself established by his word of power as the preincarnate Word of God. There is nothing in Scripture that requires a transcendent mind in Christ operating concurrently with the human mind in Christ.

#40.

Q. Doesn't the nonuse of divine attributes undermine the doctrine of the Trinity by making the the three Persons (Hypostases) of the Trinity not have the same substance?

A. Attributes are to be defined in terms of what is inherent and necessary to being in itself and also inherent and necessary to being in relation to creation. This does not apply to voluntary actions which are not inherent and necessary to being, but are contingent on the counsel of God. Christ Jesus before the incarnation in his Person or Hypostasis chose to empty Himself but not of what is inherent and necessary to being. Consequently He retained attributes that define substance while voluntarily not exercising the use of them.

#41.

Q. Doesn't the total nonuse of divine attributes destroy the continuity of the Person or Hypostasis between the preexistent and the incarnate Christ so that in Person He has loss of self-awareness and identity essential to the integrity of Personhood?

A. Questioning the integrity of Personhood between the preexistent and the incarnate Christ begs one of the most important questions that ought to be considered, concerning the capabilities of the divine being, whether the divine being has control over his own capabilities or not. If not, it is an attack on his divine sovereignty which is most fundamental to his being God. The assumption would be that God must have always everything in mind and that He can't do anything else but have everything He knows in mind whether He chooses or not. Nonuse by voluntary choice does not change the existence of inherently existing capabilities that are ontological or inherent and necessary to their existence. But that does not mean that though they exist they must always be exercised. None of the Persons/Hypostases loose capabilities by voluntarily not using them otherwise Jesus would always have to be omniscient.

#42.

Q. Wouldn't giving up the exercise of divine attributes to being truly human mean that in the state of exaltation Christ Jesus would no longer be human or have to continue not to exercise them?

A. Giving up the exercise of divine attributes is not necessary to being truly human but rather being in the form of a slave subject to the requirements of living a complete human life to accomplish redemption. Being human is only necessary to be in the form of a slave, but that does not make it necessary to give up the exercise of divine attributes at the time of Christ's exaltation when He is no longer a slave. Being exalted Christ can use the divine powers directly because of being deity in his hypostasis though because He also remains a true man He is subject to God the Father. He will rule as the God-man.

****CHAPTER 7** CONCLUSION**

The main purpose of this book is to demonstrate a coherent and logical view of Christ as the one true divine being given in Scripture. In doing this it was necessary to demonstrate explicitly and accurately how the the terms used in declarations of the early church councils were used to give a true interpretation of Scripture, even though usage and even doctrine among individual writers varied widely and there were in fact some errors in the details of their declarations and that of the church. In the main conclusions, the correct meaning of the terms used is shown by the impossibility of the alternative meanings, because the alternatives cause the statements to contradict fundamental truths concerning the Trinity and Christology. The result may be stated in summary:

God who calls Himself Yahweh, who created the world and declared that He is eternally self-existing, consists of three personal self-existent hypostases who share a single divine nature consisting of an integrated set of capabilities and are known to us in the roles of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each can individually use those capabilities of the divine nature as one numerically single divine being possessing only a numerically one essential nature. Of the three hypostases, the one called Son became God incarnate, the same divine hypostasis as before the incarnation who took on a human nature in addition to the divine nature that He continued to have and share with the Father and the Spirit. Therefore He was and is both full deity and fully

human. As a personal divine hypostasis He could use either divine or human capabilities according to his own initiative or choice. This included using either the divine capability of will or the human capability of will. Thus as the Son of God the Son could act on or be receptive to his creation through either one or the other nature according as to what was appropriate to each. In his state of humiliation He voluntarily chose to use only the human capabilities, not both capabilities in order to depend in his person entirely on God the Father working through the actions of the Holy Spirit as Jesus himself indicated to perform his miracles. In his state of exaltation the Son has been given great authority under God the Father so He can use either his divine capabilities or else his human capabilities.

A second purpose for "Christ's Deity: God's Ultimate Self-revelation" is to show that what the incarnation reveals to us about God is the instrumental view of God's "omni-" attributes, and as a consequence the thesis of the book "Christ's Humanity - A Thing To Be Grasped" is entirely consistent with the view of God given to us in Scripture. This is consistent also with the main conclusion of the Council of Chalcedon that in being a true human, both Jesus' divine nature and his human nature come together in his person and hypostasis. The unchanging hypostasis of the incarnate God can act through the operation of the capabilities of either nature. It was this divine hypostasis of the incarnate God who voluntarily took the form of a slave so that He would take no initiative to act in the divine nature as God. And if He did take such an initiative He would be usurping his position under God the Father as the only true God directly contrary to Jesus' expression to his Father in prayer.